

AN
EXPOSITION
WITH

Practical Observations

CONTINUED

Upon the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth
Chapters of the Book of

J O B:

BEING 3.

The Sum of thirty two Lectures, delivered at
Magnus near the Bridge, LONDON.

By JOSEPH CARYL, *Minister of the Gospel.*

Psal. 34. 19.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *M. Simmons*, and are to be sold by *George Calvert*,
Edward Thomas, and *Samuel Sprint*, at the *Golden Ball* in *Duck-lane*,
and the *Adam and Eve* in *Little-Brittain.* 1669.

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TO THE
CHRISTIAN
READER.

To those chiefly of this City, who have
been the Movers, and continue the Pro-
moters of this Work.

I Am your Debtour, and because
my stock cannot pass out great
sums at once, therefore I am con-
strained to discharge my credit
by these smaller payments. I need not call
upon you for acquittances or cancell'd
Bonds: I know your ingenuity will confess
more received than I have paid. I have paid
you in the Book now presented, as much as I
B 2 intended

The Epistle to the Reader.

intended for this time. But time will not suffer me to pay you what I intended and had projected for an Epistle. And I believe your selves will easier excuse a short Epistle, then a longer stay for the whole Book. Accept both with your wonted candour, and let all these Labours on your behalf be the return of your own prayers to the Father of lights, by the help of the Spirit of Grace, in Jesus Christ, for

January 12.
1646.

Your affectionate Friend

and servant in this

work of the Lord.

Joseph Caryl.



A N

E X P O S I T I O N

W I T H

P R A C T I C A L L O B S E R V A T I O N S,

C O N T I N U E D

Upon the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth
Chapters of the BOOK of J O B.

J O B 8. 1, 2, 3.

*Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,
How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall
the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?
Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty per-
vert justice?*



He answer of Eliphaz to *Jobs* first complaint, hath been opened in the fourth and fifth Chapters, together with *Jobs* reply, in the sixth and seventh. In which he labours to disaspere and vindicate himself from what Eliphaz had rashly taxed him with, Hypocrisie, The name of an hypocrite (like that of a heretick) is such, as no man

ought to be patient under.

B

But

But while *Job* endeavours to cleare himself in the opinion, or from the imputations of one of his friends, he runnes into a further arrere of prejudices with a second: Some of those arguments which he had framed to pay his debt to *Eliphaz*, and save his own integrity, being again charged upon his account, by his friend *Bildad the Shuhite*; who presents himself (a duty very commendable) as an *Advocate for God*; and he conceived there was but need he should. *Job* in his reply having (in his sense) wronged the justice of God, he takes himself obliged to stand up and clear it, to shew *Job* his supposed sinne, and provoke him to repentance, both by threatnings of further wrath, and promises of speedy mercy. Thus in general.

More distinctly, there are four parts of *Bildad's* speech.

First, A confutation of *Jobs* reply to *Eliphaz*; and he gives it us shadowed by an elegant similitude in the second verse, *How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be like the strong wind?* There's a censure upon all that he had spoken.

Secondly, He gives us an assertive Question, concerning the justice of God; to clear it from, and set it above, whatsoever might seem to stain it in the eyes of men. This we have at the third verse, *Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?* Not he.

Thirdly, In the body of the Chapter he urges divers arguments to confirm this conclusion, that, *God is just*; and these are three heads of argument, by which he confirms it.

First, From the example of *Jobs* children, and from his own present, with the possibility of his future condition, in case he repent, from the third verse unto the eighth.

The second argument is drawn from the testimony of antiquity, and that's laid down in the eighth, ninth, and tenth verses.

The third argument appears in the similitudes;

1. Of a *rush* or *flag*, in the 11, 12, and 13, verses.
2. Of a *Spiders-web*, in the 14, and 15, verses.
3. Of a *Tree flourishing* for a time, but anon plucked up, in the 16, 17, 18, and 19, verses. These are the arguments and illustrations of his grand assertion.

Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice? No he doth not. And thou mayest learn this lesson from thy own experience, from the example of thy children, from the testimony

of antiquity, yea the withering rush, the spiders-web, the luxuriant roots and branches of a tree, may all be thy Masters and instructors to teach thee this truth, That God is just.

The fourth and last part of the Chapter, sets forth the favour of God, to those who are faithful and sincere: for having maintained the justice of God, and shewed how terrible he will be to hypocrites who deal falsely with him; he now mitigates and mollifies his discourse, by proclaiming the goodness of God to sinners repenting, yea (who are the worst of sinners) to hypocrites if they repent, pluck off their masks or disguises, and truly humble themselves before him. This is the subject of the three last verses of the Chapter, Behold God will not cast away a perfect man, &c. As if he had said, Though God be just to deal with hypocrites, as he hath dealt with thee and thy children, yet he will not cast away the perfect and upright; shew thy self such, and he will receive thee. This he quickens by subjoining the further severity of God to those that shall persist in their hypocrisy, ver. 20. and in the close of the 22. Neither will he help the evil doers, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

Thus you have both the general scope, and likewise the special parts of Bildads discourse, which will give us some help towards a more clear discovery of particulars.

Verse 1. Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

The Speaker is Bildad; I shall not stay upon the person, who this Bildad was, of what line and pedigree, was touched in opening the 11. verse of the second Chapter, and therefore I shall pass to the matter about which he speaks.

Verse 2. How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?

He begins very chidingly,

How long wilt thou speak these things?

The words import either, first, admiration, How long! As if he had said, Could any man have believed that thou wouldst have spoken such things as these, and these so long! How strangely hast thou forgot thy self, to twist such a thread, and spin out a discourse so sinfully, so forwardly, so long?

Secondly, The words may carry a sense of indignation in the

Speaker, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* As if he had said, *I am not able to bear thee any longer, I cannot endure such language, it grates harshly upon mine ear, and is a burden to my spirit; for shame give over, hold thy peace, enjoyn thyself silence, lock up thy lips, How long wilt thou speak these things?*

Interrogatio ex
adjuncto tem-
pore acu eos
addit reprehensio.
Soni. Sanct.

Thirdly, The charge of an accusation may lie under these words, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* That is, *How long wilt thou speak vain and foolish words, indiscreet and false words, dangerous and blasphemous words, imputing injustice unto God? Art thou obstinate and pertinacious? Wilt thou not yet hearken to the admonitions and wholesome counsel of thy friends?* *How long!* Thus he taxes and censures him, *How long wilt thou speak?* We have the like sense in that Question, *Psal. 4. 2.* where David contends with his hardened enemies, *O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glorie into shame? How long will ye love vanitie, and seek after leasing? How long, and how long?* it is matter of admiration, to think that reasonable creatures should be so unreasonable to love vanity, and to love it long. His spirit rises and boyls so high with holy indignation, to see men so foolish, that his mouth must run over in censure and accusation, *How long!* The text of wisdomes exhortation, *Prov. 1. 22.* (*How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicities?*) bears the same gloss, one interpretation fits both.

How long wilt thou speak these things?

These things.) The demonstrative particle may have reference to the words immediately fore-going, and only to them, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* That is, the things which thou hast spoken in the sixth and seventh Chapters. The language is undervaluing and contemptuous, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* Such poor stuff. *How long wilt thou trouble thy Auditors with such matter, such fruitless, frothy, crude, and undigested matter; matter so injurious, so dishonourable to God, so unfavoury, and unedifying to man.*

Taking Job (under Bildads apprehension) as having failed and erred in his discourse. Observe, first,

Perseverance in evil is worse then the doing of evil, *How long wilt thou speak these things?* If thou having spoken once amiss had'st recall'd thy self, and stopped there, it had been more excusable, *To outlash sometimes in a word, may be a wise mans case:* but to make

make such a continued studied oration as this, and be out in all, and all to be an invective against heaven, who is able to bear it? *To speak or do ill, though but once, is too often by once; To Act evil often, is to double every act.* The shortest time is too long to serve any lust in. When the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 4. 3.) saith, *The time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*; his meaning is, *the time past is too much*: our lusts have got too much of our lives, as the world hath too much of our loves. One minute is more then we owe to the service of sinne. The sufficiency here spoken of is an excess; the time past of our lives is too much to work the will of the *Gentiles*. We may not make an equal division of our lives between our lusts and Christ, so much to Christ, so much to lust. Nothing is more unequal then this equality. We can never serve Christ too long, nor sinne too short a time. We cannot bestow too much of our breath in holy speeches and conferences; nor can we bestow too little in those which are vain, and sinful. We may justly take off those who are most concise and laconical in useles discourses, with, *How long will you speak these things? Frothie words are the waste of time as well as of breath.*

Secondly, Note, *Bildad* rebukes *Job* for his lavish language.

It is our dutie to be watchful over our words. How long wilt thou speak thus? We must observe our own words, and know what we speak. We should stop our own mouths, and put our selves to silence, when the tongue grows unruly. *It were very happy that some had power as well as authority over their own mouths, and knew how to put that bridle (spoken of in the Psalm) upon their own lips.* It is better for a man to stop his own mouth by prudence, then that another should stop it by reproof.

Thirdly, Taking *Bildad's* supposition still, that *Job* was in the wrong. Note,

It is our dutie to give check to fruitless and frothie speeches, much more to blasphemous and wicked speeches. *Bildad* thought it high time to silence *Job*, seeing *Job* would not silence himself. The Apostle represents to *Titus* the tongue-folly of the *Cretians*, *There are many unruly and vain talkers among you, especially they of the circumcision*; and what must be done with these, who cared so little what they said? He is counsell'd how to deal with them in the next words, *Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, &c.* It is a sinne in the hearer to let another speak sinfully without

without a signification of his distaste. The word which the Apostle useth to *Titus*, is a metaphor taken from the *muzzling of barking, bawling dogs*, when they open unseasonably and are unquiet, *Rational conviction is a Gospel-muzzle, and an effectual stop-mouth for unruly talkers*. And it is observable, that the Apostle useth this similitude of muzzling a dog, when he speaks of those of the circumcision, concerning whom he had given caution in a very suitable character (*Phil. 3. 2.*) *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision*; that is, of those who stood for circumcision. Writing to the *Philippians*, he calls them dogs; and his advice to *Titus* is, they must be muzzled. The noxious issues of the tongue must either be cured or stopped, *Evil words corrupt* (which is worse then the corrupting of good air) *good manners*. An infection taken in at the ear, hath often poyson'd the heart.

Fourthly, Taking *Bildad* as mistaken (and so he was) in this reproof and censure upon *Job*. Observe

Reproofs are often grounded upon mistakes. It is easie to reprove, what we do not apprehend. *Bildad* perceived not the reach and drift of *Job*, and yet he falls heavily upon him with reproofs. A due understanding of his scope, would have given a fair comment upon his words. But *Bildad* clothes the speech of *Job*, in a sense which he abhorred; and having put it in that ugly dress, he reproofs and censures it accordingly. Many disfigure the opinions and doctrines of others with conceits of their own, and presuming they hold or mean thus and thus, they dispute not against the real opinion of the opposite party, but their own disguise. As the persons of the *Primitive Christians* were often put into Lions, or Bears-skins, by their barbarous and heathenish persecutors, and then baited with dogs; so are the opinions of many *later Christians* debated.

And how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?

רוח כביר
Spiritus sum-
tur pro halitu-
da per Metony-
miam pro ver-
bo, i. e. pro voce
articulato, &
per loquelam in-
strumenta in-
verba formate.
Bald.

The Hebrew word for word runs thus, *And the words of thy mouth a strong wind*: We resume in this later clause, *How long*, and adde, *be like*, to supply the sense. There is no term of comparison expressed in the Original, yet the strength of one is implied, and therefore to fill up the meaning, we render, *And how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?* M. Broughton translates it without a note of similitude, *How long wilt thou talk in this sort, that the words of thy mouth be a vehement wind?*

Words are Air or Breath formed and articulated, by the instruments of speech. Hence breath and words are put for the same in divers Scriptures (Psal. 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Breath in the later clause, is no more then word in the first, for it was a powerful word, which caused all the creatures to stand out in their several forms. So Isa. 11. 4. *He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips (or with the wind of his lips) shall he slay the wicked;* It is not blowing upon wicked men that will slay them, but it is speaking to them; there is a power in the word of a Prophet, when spoken in the Name of Christ, which destroyes those who will not obey it, Hos. 6. 5. *I have hewed them by my Prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth.*

Secondly, * *Bildad* is conceived to allude to a certain sort or sect of men. For from *Cabir* here translated *strong*, the name of certain Poets or old Prophets is derived, whom the Greeks and Latines called *Cabirs* or *Cabirims*. These men had an affected outward gravity, yet were full of words, and much given to *Battologie*, repeating the same things over and over. *Bildad* ranks *Job* (say some) with those Prophets, *How long shall the words of thy mouth be like those roming Cabirs*, who by a needless multiplying of words, grated the ears, and burdened the spirits of all the hearers? Why dost thou speak, as if thou couldst carry the matter with empty words, and bare repetitions.

Thirdly, The word *strong winde*, may note the stoutness of *Job's* spirit, or the magnanimity he exprest in his words. *Job's* language was not cold and chill, as if his breath were frozen, but he spake with hight and heat, *The spirit and courage of a man, breaths out at his lips;* *How long shall the words of thy mouth be a strong winde?* When wilt thou yeeld to God, and lie humbly at his feet? What a heart hast thou? Thou speakest as big, as if thou hadst never been touched, as if God never laid one stroke upon thee; thou hast a weak body, but a stiff spirit: Thou speakest as if thou wouldst bear all down before thee, and by thy boldness, storm and bluster those out of countenance, who are here to give thee counsel.

Fourthly, Take in the similitude, *How long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?* That is, how long wilt thou speak so much, and speak so fiercely. For the word *Cabir* is more then *Gadol*, which signifies barely great. Grammarians note, that it signifies

* *Græci & latini Prophetas quosdam ex Hebræo Cabiros cognominarunt ob insignem eorum ad extra gravitatem & loquacitatem idem dicti Caribantes. Bold. Quos Authores latini Divos potes, seu potentiores vocant.*

Græcis, & Cispot dicuntur ab hac voce; quæ potem sive potentem denotat.

Drus. Ad magnanimitatem referri potest, quod corpore attenuato exhaustisque viribus fortiter tamen persisteret in loquendo & respondendo. Cajet.

Jobi orationem fuit frigida & languida sed vehementer & concitata. Pined.

Spiritus multi-
plex sermones
oris tui. Vulg.
πνευμα πολυ-
φωνον. Spiritus
multiloquus.
Sept.

nifies both *continued quantity* and *discreet quantity*, multitude and magnitude. How many words wilt thou speak? and how great words wilt thou speak? Shall thy words be as a great, various, enfolded winde? (so the Vulgar,) Wilt thou blow all the points of the compass at once, and like a whirle-wind, invade and circle us on every side?

Such words are like a strong winde.

First, Because of their blustering noise. There are stormy and tempestuous words. *The tempest of the tongue is one of the greatest tempests in the world.* Passionate language troubles both the air and ear, makes all unquiet, like an enraged angry winde.

Secondly, In such words as in stormy winds there is great strength to bear all down before them, or to sway all to that point they blow for. As all the trees in a Forrest look that way which the winde sits: so all the spirits in any Assembly, are apt to turn that way which words bearing a fair shew of reason direct. How often are the judgments and opinions of men, carried by words either to good or evil, to truth or error. And unless a man have good abilities of judgement and reason, to manage what he knows or holds, and to make himself master of it: It is a hard thing upon a large wind of anothers discourse, not to have his opinion turned. Hence the Apostle (*Tit. 1. 11.*) speaking of *vain-talkers*, faith, Their words *subvert whole houses*; as a strong wind, so strong words blow houses down, *They subvert whole houses*; as that subverts the frame and materials of the house, so this the people or inhabitants of the house; when Christ breathed graciously towards *Zacheus*, he said (*Luk. 19. 9.*) *This day is salvation come to this house*; when false teachers breath erroneously, *subversion comes to many houses*. The Apostle (*Ephes. 4. 14.*) using this similitude about the doctrines of men, adviseth us to look to our ground, and that we be well rooted; *That we be no more children, tossed too and fro, and carried with every winde of doctrine*; as if he had said, The winde that blowes from the lips of seducers (unless you be well established) will carry you to and fro like children, or wave your tops up and down as trees, yea endanger the pulling you up by the roots.

Thirdly, Strong words are as strong winds in a good sense, for as many strong winds purge and cleanse the air, making it more pure and healthy, so those strong wholesome winds from the mouths of men, purge the minde of error and cleanse the soul of sin:

fin : This is the special means which Christ hath set up to cleanse his people from infectious and noisome opinions. These he disperses and dispels by the breath of his Ministers, in the faithful and authoritative dispensation of the Gospel.

Fourthly, There are ill qualities in strong windes ; some are infectious winds, they corrupt the ayr, conveying ill vapours to the places on which they breathe : So there is a strong unwholsome wind of words, which carries unto sin or errour. How often are the spirits and manners of men infected and poison'd by such a breath ?

Fifthly, They may be compared unto strong winds, in regard of the lightness of them, the wind hath little solidity in it, and that's it which *Bildad* especially reproveth in *Job* ; here are a great many words, much of the tongue, but here's little matter, *Words without weight are but wind* when you gather them up, weigh and consider them fully, you can make nothing of them, there's no tack in them. Wind will not feed, no more will such words ; but wholsome and faithful words are meat and drink, strength and nourishment to the soul : Sound discourse yields a well tempered understanding, many refreshing morsels.

Lastly, they are like strong winds for the swiftness of them ; words pass speedily and fill all quickly ; *Their line is gone out through all the Earth : and their words to the end of the world,* Psal. 19. 4. Another Psalm speaks as much of wicked men, *their tongue walked thorow the earth,* Ps. 73. 9. as the wind runs from one part of the world to another : So do words, when they are sent upon an errand, either to do good, or to do hurt ; therefore God chose the Ministry of the Word, as an instrument to save his people. And it is the fittest instrument, running swiftly into the ears, and so conducting truth into the hearts of thousands at once. Upon the day of Pentecost (*Act. 2. 2, 3.*) When the Disciples met together, the text saith, *Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting ; first comes a rushing wind ; what followeth ? There appeared unto them cloven tongues with fire.* These represented the manner how the Gospel should be conveyed through the world : The holy Ghost is sent in tongues, to shew that by tongues tipt and inspired, acted and moved by the holy Ghost, the world should be subdued to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The tongue is the chief Organ of speech. And observe, with the tongues there comes a

C

wind,

wind, a rushing wind, implying that words spoken by those tongues should be as a mighty rushing wind, and like that wind, which filled all the house where they sate, should fill the world, even all Nations with the sound of the Gospel; that, like a strong wind they should bear down the errors, sins and lusts of men before them, & like a wholesome wind, purge and winnow out all the filthiness and uncleanness, the chaff and dust of mens spirits. By cloven tongues and a rushing wind, wonders have been wrought in the world. *As those unruly talkers (Tit. 1. 11.) subverted, so those who talk by rule, have converted whole houses;* the wind of words blows both good and evil to the world; and we may as much encourage holy tongues. *Let your words be long and long, a strong wind:* as check a vain talker in the language of Bildad, *How long shall thy words be strong wind?*

From this general reproof, Bildad descends to a special charge against Job.

Vers. 3. *Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?*

ἀδικήσαι xpi-

7007,

Injuste ager ju-
dicans. Sept.
Thesis est di-
cendorum.

As if he had said, *Job, thou hast spoken words, which like a strong wind pervert all things, and turn them up-side down. But, Doth God pervert? Doth he turn things up-side down. This blasphemy is the interpretation of many of thy complaints. Thou seemest to lay this aspersion upon God. But (with indignation I speak it) doth God pervert judgement?*

The Question is resolvable into a vehement negation, *God doth not pervert judgement, neither doth the Almighty pervert justice.* He gives it with a question for greater emphasis, *Doth God pervert judgement? Dost thou think he will?* Far be it from thee to think so; injustice lies far from the heart of God, justice lies at his heart, *He loveth judgement,* Psal. 37. 28.

To clear the Text, I shall briefly touch upon the single terms, 1. *God.* 2. *Almighty.* 3. *Judgement.* 4. *Justice:* And then shew what it is to pervert judgement and justice; from all it will appear, how extremely opposite it is to the very nature of God to pervert either.

728 Fortis po-
7007.

Doth God? The word is, *El*, signifying the strong God, the mighty God, the powerful God. In the second clause, *Doth the Almighty pervert justice?* We have the word, *Shaddai*, which name of God was largely opened at the seventeenth verse of the fifth Chapter.

Chapter. I shall not stay upon it here, but only as it respects the point in hand, and so there are three interpretations of that title observable.

1. It notes God all-sufficient to do what he pleaseth, or to effect what he designeth: if he gives direction for any judgement to be executed, he is *Shaddai*, it shall be done. As he is *El*, a powerful Judge to give sentence, so he is *Shaddai*, an Almighty God to execute the sentence: there is no resisting his power, no getting out of his hands, his name is *Shaddai*.

Secondly, The word signifies *one who hath all abundance, plenty and fullness in himself*; as also, whose power, goodness and bounty, flow out to the supply of others, himself having no need to receive from any other. He is a *fountain of all for all*: hence *Shaddai* cannot but do justice; he that hath abundance in himself needs not take bribes to pervert justice, *Needy Judges are often covetous Judges*; they who have not a fulness of their own, are under a great temptation to wrong others, to supply their wants. But he that gives to all, needs not receive from any. This consideration sets God infinitely above one of the strongest temptations to injustice.

Thirdly, The word *Shaddai*, is rendred, *The maker of all things*. Will the Almighty, the maker of all things, who hath set the world in such an exquisite forme and order, who hath given so much beauty to the creature; will he put things out of order, or do such a deformed act as this, *pervert justice*? he that is the maker of all things, and hath made them in number, weight and measure, will he turn the world up-side down, or make confusion in the world? it is not possible he should.

So then, the name *Shaddai*, in these three senses, is aptly applyed to God, in opposition to the perverting of justice. As *Abraham* debates the matter with him (*Gen. 18. 25.*) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right*? It is impossible for God who judgeth all men, to do an act of injustice unto any man. He that judgeth all can do injustice to none. God takes no advantage to be unjust, because none can call him to account for injustice. They should be furthest from doing wrong, who need not fear any appeal from them, or complaint against them, if they do wrong. The Judge of the whole earth hath none to judge him. He will do right to all, who cannot be judged by any.

Further, Consider those two words *judgement and justice*.

Shaddai notat robustum &

sufficientem ad omnia perpetuanda & executioni mandanda, quæ facienda judicaverit:

aliqui vertunt invidium.

Alij vertunt uberrimum, abundantem copiosum, cujus virtus, et munificentia, per omnia permeat et cujus uberibus & bonitate omnia alantur & nutriuntur, qui nullius indiget, qui bonorum nostrorum nulla cupiditate tangitur.

Pined

ὁ τὰ πάντα ποιῶν. Sept. Quod sic explicant, qui cunctarum rerum naturas summo ordine & equitate constituit, is in te affligendo, quod justum est, non subvertet.

judgement and justice are often put in Scripture for the same, and when put together, the latter is an epithite to the former, *Psal. 119. 121. I have done judgement and justice*: that is, I have done judgement *justly*, exactly to a haire. Sometimes they have a distinct signification.

*Facere legem
& preceptum
est facere judi-
cium. Deus ideo
leges suas ju-
dicia vocat,
quod æquissima
sunt, quæ præ-
scribit.*

First, Judgement signifies, that right which every man ought to do at all times (*Psal. 106. 3. Isa. 5. 7.*)

Secondly, The Law or rule it self according to which every man is to write, *Levit. 26. 26. Psal. 19. 10.* God calls all his Laws *judgements*, because they are all, most just and equal. Judgement hath a threefold opposition, by which we may understand the nature of it.

Ezek. 44 14.

First, Judgement is opposed to anger, rigour and severity, *Jer. 10. 24. Correct me O Lord, but with judgement, not in thine anger?* that is, Correct me mercifully, moderately, and in measure: suffer not thy whole displeasure to arise; do not exact the utmost farthing. In which sense the judgements of God upon wicked men in hell, shall be without judgement: And thus to do a thing without judgment, is all one, as to do it without mercy.

2. Judgement is opposed to folly, or to foolishness: Judgement is wisdom, when we say, such an one is a *man of judgement*, we mean, he is a wise man. Thus judgement is an ability to judge.

3. Judgment is opposed to injustice and wrong, which is the vulgar and common meaning.

We may take it in any of these senses here. As judgement is opposed to anger, so it is moderation in justice, *Will the Lord pervert judgement?* That is, will not he be as moderate in executing judgement, as equity can admit? *Hos. 11. 9. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger. I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the City.* As an enemy having taken a City, to shew them some favour, saith, I will not enter your City with my Army to spoyland plunder you: so God speaks here, *Though men be as wicked as they can, yet God will not be as angry as he can.*

Again, Will he pervert judgement, as it imports wisdom? No, he walks exactly by the rule of wisdom, of the highest and purest wisdom. There are no mists or clouds of ignorance before the eye of his understanding. And as he hath no darkness, so no false lights.

Lastly,

Lastly, Take it as opposed to injustice; *Will the Lord pervert judgement?* Will he wrong any man? Carries he a matter sinisterly or partially? He will not do it.

Again, As judgement and justice are taken precisely or distinctly.

First, Judgement signifies due order in trying and finding out the state of a cause: And justice the giving of sentence upon that tryal.

Secondly, Judgement is a clear knowlege of what ought to be done: And justice is the doing of that which we know, Justice is an evenness and uprightness of conscience, in passing every thing according to received light.

Thirdly, Some distinguish them thus: Judgment is in condemning those that are guilty, and justice is in absolving and acquitting those that are innocent, or rewarding those who have done well.

Fourthly, Thus: Judgment respects capital causes, which are for life; and justice respects civil causes, which are for estate or liberty.

Take them in any of these senses, or under whatsoever other distinction they are considerable The Lord God *El-Shaddai*, is no perverter of either. He never disturbs or cloggs the order of tryal; He is no hinderer of the sentence from due execution. He exactly understands every cause, and he awards what is due to every person. He wrongs no man in life or limb, in estate or liberty.

Thus we see what judgement and justice are: I shall now open what it is to pervert judgment and justice. The same word is used in both.*

Doth God pervert? Some translate it, supplant, justice. And so it imports secret cunning wayes of injustice; for to supplant, properly is to come behind a man, and to strike up his heels, and cast him down, or to lay somewhat in his way, upon which he may trip or stumble, and then fall. God doth not supplant justice, he layes no plots, he sets no snares to entangle or overthrow a man in his cause.

More largely, the word signifieth, *To make crooked*, and so it very well answers the point in hand. Judgement and justice are both carried by a strait line: they are the rectitude of our actions. To pervert judgement, is to make crooked lines; So we have the word (*Eccles. 1. 16.*) *That which is crooked cannot be made strait.*

CEUD

Judicium jus,
Quos seu mo-
dus in judican-
do.

Judicium est in
vero absq; er-
rore cognoscen-
do, justitia in
tribuendo cuiq;
quod suum est.
judicium pæ-
nam respicit,
justitia com-
pensationem
bene actorum.
Drus.

* Iste repeti-
tiones.

divina eloquia
multum com-
mendant, sive
eodem verba a-
lia sententia, si-
ve aliis verbis
eodem sententia
repetita ut: illa
enim ejusdem
rei resumptio,
moram quandã
in meditando
et ponderando
requirit, quod in
Ps. lmis ser-

quent Augusti-
nus Perverti
jubeat, detor-
quet à recto &
æquo, supplan-
tar. Vulg.

Est autem in
verbo supplan-
to) perbella

metaphora, pro-
priè est obiecto,
vel supposito
pede aliquem
ad casum in-
peltare.

He

He means it of civil, not natural things, whose crookedness is often cured by art; but who can cure all civilevills; man is not able by all his diligence to turn the course of things which God hath determined, though to him there appear much crookedness, and many distortions. *Solomon* himself makes this interpretation (Chap. 7. 13.) where he shews, that it is best to submit God, because his will is irresistible, and the effects of it unavoidable; *Consider the work of God, for who can make that straight which he hath made crooked?* So then, to pervert judgement is to make judgement crooked; or to make judgement (to which all things and persons should bow) to bow it self down, as the word is also used, *Eccles. 12. 3.* In the description of old age, *The strong men shall bow themselves*; the leggs and knees in old age bow and double under us. *To pervert justice is to creeple justice, to make it lame and halt.* This word is translated *to overthrow* (*Job. 19. 6.*) *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me in with his net.* *Job* speaks in a great passion, as if God had come upon him violently in judgement, and cast him: We say a man is overthrown or cast in his suit. God overthrows men and Nations; but he never overthrows justice. A man who overthrows his adversary, may settle justice. *Job* looked upon himself, as one against whom God had entred his action, and overthrown him in the suit. Lamenting *Jeremy* cries out (*Lam. 3. 59.*) *O Lord, thou hast seen my wrong* (it is this word) *thou hast seen how I am vexed, and wrested by the hard dealings of men, judge thou my cause; thou wilt judge me aright, and set me straight again.*

Judgement is perverted two wayes,

1. By subtilty.

2. By power.

First, Some pervert judgement by subtilty; they are wise to do evil. The Lord hath infinite wisdom, and so is able to go beyond and over-reach all creatures; he is wise enough to be-fool all the world: but he is not wise to do evil; his wisdom is not a trap or a snare to others, but an unerring guide and light to himself.

2. Some pervert judgement by violence and force: if they cannot untie the knot by craft, they will cut it asunder by power; and if they have not Law for it, they have will for it, and an arm for it, and it shall be done. The Lord can do what he will, but he hath no will to doe what is evil. He can put forth as much strength

strength as he desires, but he hath no desire to pervert justice, or to act his power to over-awe and master it.

Further, To pervert judgement and iustice, hath these two things in it,

1. *To darken and obscure the rule of judgement.*

2. *To torture or mis-interpret the rule of judgement.*

1. Judgement is perverted by darkning and obscuring the Law or rule of justice. God doth not doe so: He never casts a mist before his word, or a vail over it that he may act against it.

2. Neither doth he mis-interpret his Law. A good Law ill expounded is made the warrant of an evil judgement. A gloss corrupting the text of the Law corrupts justice. *Where tongue and conscience are set to sale, the wit must find out somewhat to help the market.*

The words opened invite these Observations. First, That

God is most exact in judgement, God is a just God. It is a high truth, and we should adore it, that whatsoever God doth, he is just in doing it. When reason cannot reach, or make it out, yet faith must: and we must honour God in what we cannot understand: The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, though his wayes are past finding out. For,

1. He hears every cause before he judges. He doth not judge one side, before he knows the other, or judge any man before he hath heard him fully out: We see both (*Gen. 11.* and *Gen. 18.*) in those two great acts of justice, when God confounded the builders of *Babel*, and when he destroyed *Sodome*, *I will go down and see whether it be altogether according to the report that is come up unto me.* God needs no intelligence to be brought him unto Heaven: neither doth he that fills all places go to any place to enform himself: but he speaks thus, to note how exact he is in point of justice; to shew, what he deales with the children of men, as a man: who, hearing a report of such a thing done, saith, *I will not judge of it by what I hear, but I will go see whether it be so or no.* Without evidence of the fact, the sentence cannot be just, though it may be right.

2. He examineth and takes confession, which is another point of justice. So he proceeded with our first parents (*Gen. 3.*) proposing interrogatories unto them, and then the judgement is pronounced according unto what was confest; he judgeth them out of their own mouths, ver. 17. *Because thou hast done this, and*
hearkened

bearkened unto the voyce of thy wife, therefore, &c.

3. God proceeds by the evidence of the Law, as well as by the evidence of the fact; and this also sets forth the exactness of his judgement: These two things make judgement perfect; you must not only have the evidence of the fact, that such a thing is done, but you must have the evidence of the Law condemning such a deed. Though God himself be an everlasting Law, and he may judge all from his own breast; yet he hath given out a Law, which gives the knowledge of sin. It is said, *Rom. 2. They that have sinned without the Law, shall perish without the Law*, as if some should be judged without Law: but he means without a Law formally published, not materially enacted. For he speaks of the *Gentiles*, who were not within the hearing of Mount *Sinai*, and had not seen that formality of a *Law written in tables of stone*; yet they had a *Law written in their hearts*; they that have not heard the Law published or seen it written in a Book, shall be judged by the *Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing them witness, and their thoughts accusing, or else excusing one another.*

4. God is impartial in giving judgement. He doth not strike one and spare another, who is under the same condemnation; nothing can sway or bias him, nothing can preponderate the balance of justice in his hand; you cannot put in any consideration to sway his beam, beside the right.

There are three things which usually cause men to pervert justice the Lord is free from them all.

1. *Fear of greatness.* Some would doe justice, but they dare not, the business concerns a great man, and to do justice upon such, is, *To take a Bear by the tooth* (as we say) *or to play with the paw of a Lyon.* Now the Lord is not turned away for fear, nor defers he justice for any mans big looks, *The day of the Lord* (saith the Prophet, *Isa. 2.*) *shall be against the high Oak.* He is *El-Shaddai*, the All-mighty, the all-powerful God, and therefore cares not for the might or power of man.

2. *Hope of reward*, that's another thing which causeth many to pervert judgment. With some their hope is stronger then their fear: They care not for the greatness of men, but they hope for gain. A bribe taken or promised clogs and obstructs the course of justice (*Hos. 4. 14.*) *Her Rulers with shame do love, Give ye;* the Hebrew is, *Her shields*, Magistrates should be as shields to the people to protect them, but what did they? *They love, Give ye,* that word

word pleased them. They were more pleased with receiving rewards, then with doing right. The Lord is above all gifts, he is *Shaddai*, he hath all in himself, and needs not that any should give unto him; and he tels them expressely (*Ezek. 7. 19.*) *That their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of his wrath*; offer thousands of silver and gold, he will not stay judgement a minute for it, *Prov. 11. 4. Riches profit not in the day of wrath*; In the day of mans wrath they sometimes will, but never in the day of Gods.

Thirdly, *Affection and nearness of relation pervert judgement*. Many have clean hands, free from bribes, and stout hearts free from fears, yet they are overcome with affection and relations; these put out the eye of justice. The Lord is above all relations. As he commands us in our cleaving unto Christ, not to know father or mother, *Yea to hate Father and mother, wife, &c.* (and those are nearest to us) that we may keep close unto Christ: So himself doth not know the nearest relation, to pervert judgement or do wrong in favour of it. Hence he saith of *Coniah* (*Jer. 22. 24.*) *Though Coniah be as the signet upon my right hand, yet will I pluck him thence*; Let him plead nearness (as men do, such a man is of your blood or alliance, pray spare him) God will not spare the signet on his right hand, that is, he will not stop justice upon any pretence of nearness or usefulness.

5. God is exact (take them distinctly) both in judgement and in justice. He is as curious in searching out the cause, as in sentencing the person. As ready to acquit the innocent, as to condemn the guilty: as careful to relieve the oppressed, as to chasten the oppressor: as * zealous in rewarding those who deserve well, as in punishing those who do evil. Not to reward is as great injustice, as not to punish. What God hath promised shall be performed, and what he threatens shall be inflicted. He will neither discourage goodness by neglecting it, nor encourage sin by winking at it. He hath bread in one hand, and a sword in the other.

Thus we see, the Lord is most exact in justice (*Psal. 48. 10.*) *The right hand of the Lord is full of righteousness*. His power and might are his right hand, and that right hand hath nothing but righteousness in it. Few men come to that of *Laban*, *It is in the power of mine hand to do thee hurt*, but I will not: most do as much hurt as is in their power. God hath all power in his hand, but he wrongs no man. As none have now any cause to say, that they have recei-

*Etiam si fuisset
leconia mihi
charissimæ,
quem semper in
oculis ferrem.*
Jun.

* *Pervertit jura,
qui non punit
improbos; per-
vertit justiti-
am, qui non re-
munerat justo-
rum bona ope-
ra.* Drus.

ved wrong from the hand of God: so at last all shall confess they have not.

Further, *Bildad* speaking upon supposition, that God was wronged in justice, teacheth us, That

It is a duty to vindicate the justice of God, whensoever we hear it wronged. When we hear any wounding God in his faithfulness, truth, or justice, we should presently stand up to plead for him; What, will God be unfaithful? Will God pervert judgement? Will God be untrue? &c. Thus we should plead for God. When *Jeremy* could not make out the justice of God, he is an advocate for his justice, *Lord, thou art righteous, yet let me plead with thee.* He would not have the matter once questioned, though the manner was enquired.

Lastly, Observe, That

The judgements of God may be secrets to us, but they are never injuries to us. Justice is in all the dealings of God, but his justice is not alwayes visible. His judgements are founded upon reason, when upon his will, for his will is the highest reason. God cannot be unjust, and he ever punishes those who are. He is so far from subverting judgement, that he subverteth Kings and Magistrates, yea Nations and Kingdomes for subverting judgement; *To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not*, Lam 3.36. The Hebrew is *The Lord seeth not*: That is, he doth not see it to approve it; but he doth see it to punish it. He is an avenger of those who will not avenge the oppressed. And as he looks for judgement in all places, so especially among his own people, upon whom he bestowes most mercy: (*Isa. 5.2.*) when the Lord had done so much for his vineyard, *He looked for Judgment, and behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.* God makes privy search thorow a Nation to find this Jewel: Judgement between man and man in commerce, which is, *commutative justice*; judgement from Magistrates to the people, which is, *distributive justice*: for these God is searching at this day; one of the greatest sins among us, is, the perverting of judgement: And until Judgement return to man, how can we expect mercy should return from God? (*Jer. 5.1.*) *Run to and fro thorow the streets of Jerusalem, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgement, that loves the truth, & I will pardon it.* A Land is seldome fill'd with the judgements of God, till it is emptied of judgement among men. What a sad thing is it that there should be so many cries against in-justice

justice on earth, in a time when there is so much crying out for mercy from heaven ! That in such a time when the judgements of God are upon ourselves, we should not learn righteousness to act it among our selves ! I am perswaded the *Sword of warre* had been rusting in it's sheath to this day, if the *Sword of justice* had been used as it ought, both to punish offenders, and protect the innocent. And when the sword of justice shall be both wayes imployed, I doubt not but the sword of war shall be sheathed again, and imployed no more, but be *beaten into plow-shares, and our spears into pruning hooks*. Keep ye judgement (saith the Lord by his Prophet, *Isa. 56. 1.*) for my salvation is neer to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. God hath done terrible things in righteousness among us, and we hope he will do comfortable things in righteousness among us: seeing the righteous destructions of God have been upon us, and his righteous salvations (we hope) are neer us, let not our righteousness be far off.

J O B Cap. 8. Vers. 4, 5, 6, 7.

If thy children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression.

If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty.

If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly encrease.

THESE four verses contain the first confirmation of the former general position, *That God is just*: which is resolved out of those Questions, *Doth God pervert judgement? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?* He doth not. Then, *God is just*, there's the Position. And as that Position consisteth of two parts, so also doth this proof or confirmation of it.

1. That God doth not pervert judgement (taking judgement under that strict notion for punishing of offenders) he proveth by

the example of *Jobs* children, whom God punished because of their transgression, as he conceived.

2. That God doth not pervert justice (taking justice under that strict and distinct notion of rewarding and relieving the innocent) he proveth by the readiness of God to do *Job* good in case he should humble himself and repent, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh verses.

His argument for the former may be thus conceived.

He doth not pervert judgement who punisheth those who have sinned against him.

But God hath punished thy children for their sin:

Therefore he doth not pervert judgement.

His Argument for the latter may be thus formed.

He doth not pervert justice who is ready to pity as soon as an offender humbly seeks, sues, and submits unto him.

But God is ready to help thee as soon as ever thou humbly seekest unto him:

Therefore God doth not pervert justice.

Thus you have the general sense of these four verses, as arguments brought for proof of the former point, that God doth not pervert judgement or justice. I shall now open them distinctly.

If thy children have sinned against him.

There may be a two-fold sense given of these words.

First, Thus: *Although thy children have sinned against him, and he hath cast them away for their iniquity; yet, if thou wilt seek unto him, he will do thee good.* Which translation makes the sense more clear than ours, *If thy children have sinned against him, &c.* The one is a supposition of what might be; the other a concession of what was.

Secondly, By way of proportion, thus: *As thy Children have sinned against him, so he hath cast them away for their transgression.* And so *Bildad* argueth with *Job* upon the same principle that *Eliphaz* had done before, scil. that his sonnes and himself had exceedingly provoked God, and that therefore God had sent that judgement, and laid that heavy stroke upon them, *If thy children, or, although thy children have sinned.*

לְפָנָיו *Against him.*] That word is to be opened a little. The Hebrew is, *Have sinned to him.* Which is indifferently translated, either

either before him or against him ; we take the latter.

Every sin is committed against God ; that's the first. Sinne is most opposit to God. It is against God in his nature : against God in his will : against God in his very being. Sin would thrust God out of the world, if it were possible ; and therefore it is rightly translated, *They have sinned against him.* No marvel if God do so much against sinners, when sin doth so much against him ; but is it not a miracle, that God should do any thing, especially such great things for sinners, when sinne doth so much against him? *David* (Psal. 51.4.) saw his sin was so much against God, that he overlooks all others against whom it was, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*, which some mis-interpret, as if, because he was a King, he could do no injury to his subjects, and therefore saith, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned.* But, *They who rule men, may sin against man* : and *David* sinned in that act against man; First, by doing private wrong. Secondly, by giving publick scandal. The reason then why *David* spake thus, was because the sin he had committed was so much against God, that though he had grievously offended against man, in taking away the life of one subject, the chastity of another, and by endangering the whole army to compass a cover for his sin, yet, in this, his sin exceeded in sinfulness, that he sinned against God ; and therefore he saith, *Against thee, thee only* ; or, take it comparatively, the sin is so much against thee, that what is against any other is not worth the naming. *God is not only wronged, but he is chiefly wronged in every sin.* As, because in the wrong done to the life or estate of a subject, the King is chiefly wronged, therefore all Inditements run in this stile, *Against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity.* Lastly, That place may be understood in the second sense of, *Against thee*, that is, *Before thee* ; and so it seems to be expounded in the latter part, *Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*, that is, though others took no notice of this, though it was done in secret (2 Sam. 12.12.) yet it was committed clearly and plainly before thine eyes; thine eyes, which are ten thousand times brighter then the Sun, beheld me in the darkness of that folly ; and therefore against thee have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight ; as nothing, that though it were conceal'd and hidden from men, yet it could not be conceal'd and hidden from God. *If thy children have sinned against him.*

לִּי לַכֹּדֶף
Tibi, tibi soli.

And he have cast them away for their transgression.

Bildads position is true in it self, but false in the application, *If thy children have sinned against him.* It is a truth that godly parents may have wicked children. Grace doth not alwayes run in a bloud. But it was unevident unto *Bildad* that *Jobs* children had sinned against God in his sense. It is not the common sinner whom *Bildad* meaneth; by sinning against God he intends not the inevitable actings of sinful nature, but the voluntary studied improvements, heightnings, and provocations of sinful nature.

Further, In that he concludes, *They were cast away for their transgression:* He faileth again. It is a truth, that sin is the meritorious cause of punishment, *Thy destruction is from thy self,* saith the Lord, *Hos. 13. 9.* *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee,* *Jer. 4. 18.* Sin will help us to sorrow enough. Yet this is not a truth, that every man is afflicted for his sin. As no man knows the love or hatred of God: so no man knows the sinne or holiness of man by all that is before him: we cannot argue every one is cast away for his transgression, because he is cast away.

He hath cast them away for their transgression.

ישראלם ביד
פשעם

The Hebrew is very elegant, *He hath sent them away in the hand of their transgression:* or, *He hath put them into the hand of their transgression.* M. Broughton translates it so. *As thy children have sinned against him: so he hath sent them into the hand of their trespasses.* Into the hand, that is, into the power, as (*Chap. 5. 20.*) the hand of the Sword, is, the power of the Sword: and (*Psal. 63. 10.*) *They shall fall by the Sword;* the Hebrew is, *They shall fall by the hand of the Sword.* Then, *He hath delivered them into the hand of their transgression,* is, into the power of their transgression.

שלח

Simpliciter
mittere aut e-
jicere signifi-
cat, quasi cum
recto tramite
aberrassent ab-
errandi copiam
pro libidine fa-
cisset.

There are two things considerable about this expreffion of sending or giving up into the hand of transgression.

1. It may note, That God had delivered up *Jobs* children unto the reign or dominion of their own sinful hearts, or had laid the raines in their necks, suffering their lusts to hurry them whither they would, to carry them captive unto every sinne, and rush them head-long into every evil. The word----here used, signifies either simply, to send, or violently to cast, or to put a thing away from us: and so, it is as if *Bildad* had said, *For as much as thy*

thy children would sin against God, he suffered them to sin their fill; they being wicked, he gave them up to do all wickednesses; They love to wander from him, and he let them wander. We have this sense of the word (Prov. 29. 15.) *A child left unto himself brings his mother to shame*: The Hebrew is, *A child sent away, sent to himself, or put into his own hands*. A child sent away to himself, or left alone, bringeth shame, that is, will certainly run into vile and enormous courses, to the shame of her that bare him. A child left, or sent to himself, is one that hath no guide, no governour, no instructor but himself. *A man that will learn only of himself, hath but a fool to his Master*. How much more then a weak child; what a master, what a tutor hath a child, if he have none but himself? To be left or sent out to themselves, is, to have none to counsel, or advise them in a right way, or to give them any stop and check in an ill way. The character that Paul and Barnabas gave of the former times, when they preached to the Heathens at *Lystra*, was this, (Act. 14. 16.) *We exhort you to turn unto the living God that made heaven and earth, who in times past suffered all Nations to walk in their own ways*. He let them go, and never staid them at all, they had no bridle of restraint, not so much as a word to bring them back; He suffered all Nations, as if he had said, *He left them in the hand of their transgression*, that their own evil hearts should do what they would with them. In which sense we may also understand that place (Acts 17. 30.) when Paul at *Athens* disputed with the Philosophers, he tels them that now God began to look towards them, and had sent them the knowledge of Christ, *The times of that ignorance God winked at; but now he calleth all men every where to repent*. The words undergoe a two-fold interpretation; Some thus, to note the indulgence of God, *The time past of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, he did not deal severely and strictly with them, when they sinned, because they had no means, or so little means to keep them from sin. And there is a truth in it, for though ignorance doth not totally excuse sin, yet it doth abate the degree and measure of sin. But there is another sense, which I rather embrace, *The times of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, in those times wherein there was so much darkness and blindness in the world, God let men go on in their sin: they sinned, and he never called upon them, he never opposed them, or sent any to teach them better. God did not manifest his will to them as unto the Jews, Psal. 147. 19, 20. *He sheweth his word unto Jacob,*

*Nihil aliud sibi
vult Pauli
verba quæ cæ-
citati additos
fuisse homines,
donec se illis
Deus pate fa-
ciat. Calv.*

Jacob, his statutes and judgements unto Israel; he hath not dealt so with any Nation, &c. So that this winking is opposed to favour, rather then to justice. To have the eye upon a place, or upon persons, is to shew them favour, *1 Kin. 8. 29.* The latter branch clears this meaning, *But now he calleth all men every where to repent:* now he doth not leave men in the hands of their transgressions: he doth not wink and let them do what they list; now Gospel-light is risen to the world, and there are many sent out to call in and reclaim wandring prodigals, many to cry, *Return, Return.* He speaks of it as of the mercy and priviledge of that age, beyond what the former ages had enjoyed. That of the same Apostle hath a parallel sense (*Rom. 1. 20. & 26.*) where describing the dealings of God with the *Gentiles*, who sinned against the light of Nature, he concludes, *Therefore God left them in the darkness of Nature, in the worst of nature: they came not up so high, as the principles of nature might have led them in the worship of God, therefore he left them below the principles of nature in the things of man, He gavethem up to vile affections,* which is as much as to say, *He put them in the hands of their transgressions.* And *vers. 28.* *He gave them over to a reprobate mind,* to a mind that could not judge aright, which had not a true understanding of any thing: Hence they elected the worst, and reprobated the best things. The like we have (*Psal. 81. 11.*) of Gods own people the Jews, *So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels.* The Hebrew is, *I sent them into the pertinacy of their hearts,* because I had so often called upon them, and they would not hearken, nor return unto me, therefore I said, forasmuch as you will not hear, you shall not hear; because you will not obey, you shall have none to call you to obedience; follow the counsels of your own hearts, as long as you will. This is the first sense, of putting or sending them into the hand of their transgression, scil. a leaving them to the reign of their lusts.

*Expulit eos e
mundo propter
prævaricatio-
nem. Pagn.
Permisit eis
pervenire, quod
scelus eorum
postulabat.
Tygur.*

Secondly, (Which is the sense our translation holds out) *Thou hast left them, or sent them into the hand of their transgression:* That is, Thou hast left them in those evils, which transgressions did deserve and call for. Our reading carries that meaning, *He hath cast them away for their transgression:* Others thus, *He hath thrust them out of the world for their transgression, He hath suffered that to befall them which their transgression called for.* According to these, the sense is, *Thy children sinned against him; and he hath let those evils* which

which their sin deserved fall upon them; He hath rewarded them according to their iniquity (Isa. 64. 6, 7.) Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away: Thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed (or melted) us, because of our iniquities. The Hebrew is, Thou hast consumed or melted us in the hand, or in the power of our iniquities. And somewhat parallel to this sense, is that (Gen. 4. 6.) *Alliisti nos in manu iniquitatis nostrae. Vul.* If thou dost ill (saith God to Cain) sin lies at the door; As if he had said, thou shalt be given into the hand of sin presently, thy sin shall arrest thee, and bring those evils upon thee which it serveth; thou shalt not need any other punishment, then thy own wickedness.

Hands and power are ascribed to sin, because God gives men over to those punishments which their sins challenge at his hands. Some sins have a louder voice then others; but every sin unpardoned (the mouth whereof is not stopt by the blood of Christ) cries to God for vengeance, till God put the sinner into the hand of sin, that he may at once receive pay for, and from his own folly. Observe from the former interpretation, First, That

The Lord doth often in judgement give man up to the power of his sinful lusts.

This is a general truth, though we cannot draw it down to the instance of *Jobs* children: the Lord in wrath leaves man to himself. Every man by nature sins freely, and many are left by God to a judiciary freedom in sinning. He cannot restrain himself, and sometimes God will not restrain him, but lets him take his fill of sin, and be as wicked as he will (Rev. 22. 11.) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.* This permission is the highest and sorest affliction. This liberty is worse then any bondage. Thus also the Church leaves those to their ignorance, who obstinately refuse instruction (1 Cor. 14. 38.) *He that is ignorant, let him be ignorant still.* Those souls are in a desperate condition, who are put out of the care either of God or of his Church. Secondly, Observe, That

Sin is a punishment.

Sin is the punishment of sin: Thy children sinned against him, and he gave them into the hand of their sin; he never goes unpunished for sin, who sins and repents not. Thou, Lord (saith one of the Ancients) hast decreed it, and so it is, that every evil mind is it's own scourge. The Apostle tells us (Heb. 10. 31) that *Tu, Domine, dixisti & ita est, ut omnis malus animus sibi ipsi sit pœna. August.* it is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God: it is indeed, and

*Ulciscetur
eum mores sui,
Cicero ad At-
ticum.*

and it is as fearful a thing to fall into the hand of deadly sins, or dead works. How dreadful a thing is it to be under the power and tyranny of our own hearts. The committing of sin is worse then the enduring of trouble. The Lord doth not only punish men according to their sins, but he makes their sin their punishment, yea, their sins are their punishers. He puts them into the hand of sin, as into the hands of a tormentor. A Heathen could threaten a wicked man, thus, *His manners shall be his revenge*. Holiness carries its reward with it, and though no creature will recompense the good we do, yet doing good is a recompense. In keeping the Commandments of God, there is an exceeding great reward, *Psal. 19. 11*. The act of keeping them is a reward, as well as the issue. *A good work is pay enough to the worker*. So also is an evil work, *Prov. 1. 32*. *The turning away of the simple shall slay him*. A simple child, that will not be ruled, counselled or ordered (such Solomon speaks of, *Ye simple ones, how long will ye love simplicity?* That is, your own foolish, vain wayes.) *The turning away of such simple ones from the counsel of the wise, shall slay them*. The way of sin is death, as well as the end or wages of it. *As saith the Proverb of the Ancients* (they are the words of David concerning Saul, *1 Sam. 24. 14*) *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand shall not be upon him*. David knew that Saul was a man so wicked, that he needed no other revenger but his own self, his own sin would bring misery enough upon him: therefore saith he, *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked*, that is, the punishment of wickedness proceedeth from the wicked man himself. Observe the occasion of those words, it was when some about David advised him to slay Saul, not I, saith he, *my hand shall not be upon him*, I know he is a man so given up to sin, so enslaved to his own vile affections, that there's enough upon him already, and in a short time more will be upon him, *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand shall not be upon him*; I will leave him to the hand of his sin, which is his plague already, and which in a little time will attach him, and do me right, though he never would. When God took up a resolution against his own people, that he would not hear or be intreated, and protested his mind could not be towards them, he saith, (*Jer. 15. 2*.) *Let them go forth such as are for the sword to the sword, and such as are for the famine, to the famine, and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity*. This was a dreadful sentence; but for God to say to a people, *Let them go forth in the*

the wayes of their sin; he that is for drunkenness, to be drunk; he that is for uncleanness, to be unclean; he that is for pride, to be proud; he that is for swearing, to oaths; and he that is for envie, to be envious; and he that is for idolatry, to his idols. O how unconceivably miserable are such a people! To be left in the hand of these sins, is a spiritual judgement; and these sins will quickly bring in temporal judgements, and not long hence eternal.

From the latter interpretation, Observe,

Sin shall not alway go away unpunished by outward, sensible evils.

God will sink and cast men away for their transgressions. If sin be in the house, punishment lies at the doors, and will turn the lock and open it, or break it open upon the sinner. And though he hide himself in vaults or secret corners, yet his iniquity will find him out. *He that will not cast away his transgression, shall be cast away for his transgression*, whether he will or no.

So much for these words, wherein Bildad sets before Job the sinfulness of his children, thereby to vindicate the justice of God in giving them up to the dominion of their sin, or to destruction for their sins. In the next words he adviseth Job to take heed by their harms, and assures him of happy success, in case he doe. As if he had said, though they perished in their transgressions, yet do not thou despair. For,

Vers. 5. *If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty, &c.*

God hath been just in punishing thy children, and he will be merciful in pardoning thee, in accepting thy person, in prospering thy estate, if now at last thou apply thy self to seek him diligently; *Though thy children have fallen into the hand of their transgression, yet there is hope that thou mayest escape*. Thus he deals with him in a way of counsel, as Eliphaz had done before, Chap 5. v. 8. *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause*; this is the counsel I give thee, and the course I would take my self. Bildad speaks the same in effect, and almost in the letter; *If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication unto the Almighty. &c.* He would awake for thee.

There are two parts of Bildads counsel.

1. To humble himself in prayer, ver. 5.

2. To purge himself by repentance, ver. 6.

Or, we may look upon this counsel as a pattern of repentance, and turning to God, in three things.

1. To seek unto God.

2. To acknowledge our own unworthiness to receive any mercy from God.

3. To be sincere and upright-hearted with God in both.

If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes.

Est quafi annus. re aut diluculare Deum. Diligenter, sedulo, et magno studio quærere.

Qui mare surgit precandi causa, dicitur manicare Deum. Druf.

We have met with the word more then once before; and in strictness of translation it sounds thus much, *If thou wouldst seek unto God in the morning*; or, *if thou wouldst morning God*, be with him early in the morning, that is, if thou wouldst seek unto him diligently: they that come in the morning about business, are diligent in their business. The Apostles rule is (*Heb. 3.*) *To day harden not your hearts*; but here *Bildad* adviseth, *Whilest it is morning*, which is the first part or beginning of the day, pour out thy heart to God. So then, it may be taken for seeking God either at the first of the day, the morning; or, for any earnest, diligent and fervent seeking unto God in any part of the day; To seek God diligently, though in the night, is according to this Hebraisme, a seeking him in the morning.

It was an ancient custome to seek God in the morning (take it in the letter) early in the morning. *David* professes this, *Psalms 5. 3.* *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And Heathens, by the light of nature, took this course in their profane and superstitious worship. *Herodotus* in his tenth book, tells of the *Persian Magi*, who addressed themselves early in the morning to seek their false Gods. And the Primitive Christians were wondered at for their early devotions. *Pliny* in an Epistle to *Trajan* and *Tertullian* in his *Apologeticks* for the Christians, report their assemblies before day-break to pray and call upon God. And there hath been, and still is a superstitious abuse of this among the Papists, who call their morning prayers, their *Mattins*, because they begin early in the morning.

Hence observe, First,

Prayer is our seeking unto God.

That's the general description of prayer. When we pray, our work is to get near to God, to find God; every soul that prays indeed,

*Herodot. l. 10.
Plin. Ep. 57.
ad Trajan.
Tertul. Apol.
cap. 2.*

indeed, feels it self at a loss for somewhat, that God only can bestow. In God all that we want is to be found, and therefore he invites us to seek him. In this life the Saints are a generation of seekers : In the next, they shall be a generation of enjoyers ; when God is fully found, there's nothing more to be sought : Having him, we have all. The work of Heaven is to bless God for what we have found, not to seek him for what we want.

Secondly, *God must be sought unto without delay.*

As it is with vows, so with prayers, *defer not to pay them ; defer not to pray, Isa. 55. 6. Seek him whilest he may be found. Mat. 6. 33. Seek first the Kingdom of God ; first in time ; not only chiefly, but early, put not God behind in the latter part of the day, or in the latter end of your businesses. It is best to begin with him who is best.*

Thirdly, *God must be sought unto with diligence.*

We must lay our strength and spirits out in seeking God. It is not a sleight enquiry which finds out God. We read that he is found of some who seek him not at all, but that he is found of any who seek him negligently, we read not. Free-grace prevents those who have no ability to seek him, but it meets not those who will not lay out their abilities in seeking him. *If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes,*

And make thy supplication to the Almighty.

The word which we translate (*Make thy supplication*) is very significant of the manner how we should seek unto God, namely, bottoming our selves upon free-grace alone. A thought of our own worth is inconsistent with a *supplication* ; *call upon the Almighty for pity*, saith M. Broughton. When we supplicate, we desire that to be done for us, for which there is no reason in us why it should be done. *To make supplication*, is to seek help or releif freely or *gratis*, acknowledging there is nothing in us worthy of love. That *adverb* used in the first, & repeated in the second Chapter, where the devil objects, *Doth Job serve God for nought*, that is, without respect of good pay for his pains from God, that *adverb* (I say) comes from this *verb*. As we ought to serve God (in this sense) for nought, and not like mercenaries for our hire : So God helps us for nought, without looking to any thing in us, or from us, as an hire of his help. The Baptist had his name (*John*) from this word,

Verbum 137
denotat grati-
tam illam
commiseratio-
nem, quæ sine
ullo merito im-
penditur.

word either because he preached the free grace of God in Christ, then exhibited ; or because God bestowed him upon his parents in their old age, as a special grace and favour : *The poor* (saith Solomon, Prov. 18. 23.) *useth intreaties* ; some render it thus, *The poor maketh, or speaketh supplications* ; a poor man hath nothing of desert to plead, why he should receive your charity, but he lies at your feet, and begs somewhat, because he is in want, because misery hath arrested and taken hold upon him : *The poor useth intreaties*, he doth not call for any thing of right, and he will not wrest any thing from you by force ; he only supplicates your favour. We in our drawing nigh unto God should pray for grace and favour, as a poor man, begging an alms, who makes his plea, that he is poor. So then, *Bildads* counsel to *Job* is this, *Stand not upon thy tearms with God, plead not thine own integrity, and good works, but cast thy self at his feet for mercy, Make thy supplication unto him.* The word is used by *Moses* Dent. 3. 23. when he describeth his own unbelief, for which God said he should not go into *Canaan*, *And I besought the Lord at that time, saying, &c.* When *Moses* perceived God was angry, he did not reckon his former good services to ballance this failing, but sought unto God for mercy, as one that had never done him any service at all. And as man expresses his desires of free grace by this word, so doth the Lord his highest actings of it, *Exod. 33. 19. I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious.* To shew, that to make supplication, is, to desire the Lord to be gracious ; and that to be gracious is to do that, which is desired by a supplication ; the same word in the Hebrew signifies, both an act of lowest humility in us, namely a making a supplication, and an act of highest Grace in God, namely the granting of a supplication. Hence observe,

First, *In seeking God we must look to receive all from his free-grace and undeserved favour.*

Seek unto God, and make thy supplication to him. Mercy in God is the spring of all the mercies received by man. What can a beggar, who comes to a King, ask upon desert ? That's the condition of every one that comes to God : we are a company of beggars, the riches both of temporal and spiritual blessings are treasur'd up in God. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, they who look upon themselves as mean and low, as not having a rag of goodness about them, as emptied of themselves, are the vessels which God will fill, *He that is full loatheth a bony-comb* ; and he that thinks he is full, is loathed

loathed so much by God, that his real emptiness shall never filled. When *Jacob* held God so fast that he would not let him go without a blessing, he had quite let go all hold, yea, or opinion of his worthiness to receive a blessing, *I am less then the least of all thy mercies*, (Gen. 32. 10.) Then we are fit to receive great things from God, when we are little, and then fittest, when we are least in our own eyes. Yea, we must supplicate God, not only as a beggar, but as a traitor or a rebel doth a King: who hath not only nothing in him to commend him to his acceptance, or procure his favour, but much to provoke his wrath, and incur the weight of his displeasure. Every sin in it self renders us rebels against God. And though his own people, coming unto him in Christ, are under another notion, they are his sons, yet, even they ought to have such apprehensions of themselves for sin, *Abraham beleived in him that justifieth the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. Even *Abraham*, after he was justified in the sight of God through faith, looked upon himself as ungodly, in reference to his own works. In all our approaches to God, we should reflect upon our selves, not only as having many wants, and no worthiness, but as having many sins, and (of our own) no goodness. God (in justice) visits iniquity upon them that hate him, (Exod. 20. 6.) *And he sheweth mercy unto thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments*; they who love God and keep his Commandments, receive all from mercy. Justice punisheth those who break the Commandment, but mercy doth them good who keep the Commandments. *We have at any time sin enough to merit the wrath of God; but we never have goodness enough to merit his favour*. And as no objection from our sinfulness can obstruct the way of free-grace from moving towards us: so no argument from our holiness can open the way, for free-grace to move towards us. In all our duties we are to lye in the dust, yea, we are to lay our duties in the dust, and to seek all of God in humble supplications.

Consider this verse in connexion with the former, and then two points are observable from it. *Bildad* assuring *Job*, that though his sons had fallen by their sin, yet, if himself would seek unto God, and make his supplication, it might be well with him, teacheth us,

First, *That the falls of others, whether into sin or under judgement for sin should be warning to us*.

Thou seest what is become of thy sons: let them be as a looking-glass

glafs for thee. Children may teach their parents, parents are often whipt upon their childrens backs. The hand of God upon others points towards us, and while they are smitten we are instructed. The Apostle fums up the most remarkable judgements which fell upon the Jews in their passage from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, and clofeth all with this application to Christians, *These things happened unto them as ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, &c. to the intent that we should not lust,* 1 Cor. 10. 11. As if he had said, God let them fall into the hand of their fins, and their fall may help us to keep our feet. Their falls were *types* (so the word is) these things happened unto them *tipically*, in them we may see what God will do with us, if we take their course, and go their way.

τύπος, proprie
significat notā
in sculptā pulsa
tione seu percus
sione effectū.
Bezain John
20. 25.
τύπος παγὶ τοῦ
σταυροῦ, percus
sione. Unde Ars
Typographica.

The Greek is very elegant and expressive of this sense. For a *type* is such a form or representation of a thing, as is made by hard pressing or striking of it, such as we see in stamps and seals. It is the leaving of a mark with a blow; implying, that the Lord by those strokes upon his ancient people, left marks upon their bodies or printed letters there (the Greek word for a Printer is a *Type-writer*) which were legible to their posterity, and are to this day. Hence the scar which the nails made in the hands of our blessed Saviour upon the cross, is called, *The print of the nails*; or, *The type of the nails*, Joh. 20. 25. Such a *type* or *print* sufferings leave behind them. How many such *types* have we at this day? Where can we goe, but we may see the print of the Sword, and thrust our hands into the wounded sides, *Let us not be faithless but believing?* The Apostle Peter, (2 Epist. 2. 6.) brings the Apostate Angels, the old world, filthy *Sodome*, as admonitory examples unto those that should live ungodly. They made themselves evil examples by committing sin, and God made them good ensamples by punishing them for their sin.

Secondly, From the connexion, observe,

That they who are equal in sin, may be unequal in punishment.

Job was (in the judgement of his friends) as deep in sin as his children; but though he had sinn'd like them, or more then they, yet he might be unlike them in suffering, or suffer less then they. God (saith *Bildad*) hath taken them quite away, he hath but wounded you, and if you seek unto God he is ready to heal you. The same sinns for matter, are in heaven and in hell, that is, take two who have

have committed the same sins for matter; and for degree also (as sin is a transgression of the Law) and the one of these may be found in heaven, and the other in Hell at the last day. Yea, I believe, there are many in heaven, that have committed greater sins then some that are in Hell. It is not the matter of sinne committed, but the obstinacy, impenitency, or unbelief of the sinner, which bindes on the guilt, and seals up the sinner to judgements temporal, and to condemnation eternal.

Verse 6. *If thou wert pure and upright, he would awaken for thee, &c.*

Bildad counsels *Job* to seek God, yet he puts in a caution, *If thou wert pure and upright*: As if he had said, I advise thee to seek unto God, and to make thy supplication to him; but take heed of doing this with a purpose to continue in thy sinne, *If thou wouldst seek unto God, and make thy supplication to him in purity, and uprightness of heart, He would awaken for thee.* Holy prayers awake God. Be holy, and thou shalt be sure of audience and acceptance when thou prayest.

In the former verse he gave advice for the duty to be performed, here he gives advice in reference to the person who is to perform the duty. Thy duty is to seek unto God, and to make supplication to the Almighty, but look thine one heart be pure and upright. Take heed of coming to a holy God in thine unholiness.

Pure and upright.) The word signifieth to shine or glister, as glass or crystill, noting, that the purity of our lives in holiness shines as light, *Matth. 5. Let your light so shine before men.* The works of the Saints should be clear as Cryстал. The word is used (*Lam. 4. 7.*) to set forth the exactest beauty, *Her Nazarites were purer then snow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then rubies, their polishing was of Saphyr.* The Oil (*Levit. 24. 2.*) and the frankincense (*Exod. 30. 4.*) appointed for the use of the Sanctuary, are both thus expressed, *pure oil, pure frankincense, shining Oil, or shining Frankincense, transparent Oil, &c.* such as you may look thorow, not obscure or dark. The oyl and frankincense were a type of their purity, who had communion with God in holy things. The same word is used by *David*, complaining under a temptation (*Psal. 73. 15.*) of lost labour, or labour in vein in washing himself. Some wash in vain, because they are still
F
unclean,

וְאִם תִּהְיֶה
לִּי כֶסֶד
לִּי כֶסֶד
לִּי כֶסֶד
lucere in
dum vitri argu
chrystalli

Thus luc diffi
mum, pelluci
dum.

Peccatum vocatur macula, & sanctitas mundities, quod quæ maculata & infecta erant habebantur profana & divino conspectui indigna.

Purus ad cor pertinet, rectus ad actiones, ut dicitur purus corde rectus opera. Bras.

unclean, and get not out their spots; others think they wash in vain, because, though clean, they cannot obtain their comforts. Thus David thought he had washed in vain, *I said, Verily I have cleansed mine heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency, for I am chastened, &c.* David by cleansing got the sin-spots out as well as most men, but he could not get the affliction spots out, this was his temptation. Sinne is a blot, a spot, an uncleanness, a filthiness; holiness is purity, beauty, honour, light; Things which have the greatest excellency and lustre, are but the shadowes of holiness.

There is a twofold purity: First, the purity of our natures, which is received at conversion. Secondly, the purity of our conversations, which is renewed by repentance; we may understand both, or either in this place.

And upright.) It is the word used in the first verse of the first Chapter, *Perfect and upright.* Here *pure and upright*: we may thus distinguish them: purity referres to outward acted holiness, or holiness of life, and uprightness to inward sincerity, or holiness of the heart; and so his meaning is, if thou wert pure in thy wayes, and sincere in thine ends; if thy outward man, and inward man were washed and reformed, *Then he would amke, &c.* Observe hence,

First, *Holy persons are fit for holy duties, and only they.*

Sin is our separation from God, and holy duties are acts of communion with him: how then shall sin and duty stand together?

Make thy supplication, seek unto God, but be thou pure and upright. What have unholy persons to doe about holy things? God cannot like the services of those who are unlike him. Prayer purifies, yet purifying must be a preparative to prayer, *Psal. 66. 18.* *If I regard iniquity in my heart (if I lodge filthiness there) God will not bear me; he will not regard my prayer.* The blind man saw this truth, *Job. 9. 31.* (it seems this was a received maxime among them) *God beareth not sinners.* We are commanded to pray, *lifting up pure hands*, *1 Tim. 2. 8.* An Heathen being at Sea in a great storm, and perceiving many wicked wretches with him in the ship, calling upon the gods, O (saith he) *forbear prayer, hold your tongues, I would not have the gods take notice that you are here, they will sure drown us all if they do.* If an heathen by the light of nature could say this, much more may we by the light of Scripture, *That God beareth not sinners, Isa. 1.* *When you spread forth your hands*

Silete (inquit) ne vos hic navigare dii sentiant, Bras.

bands, I will bide mine eyes from you, yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of bloud. As he speaks out the fullness of the grace of God (*Come let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, &c.*) So also the necessity of gracious purity in man, *Wash ye, make ye clean, &c.* Observe,

Secondly, *The prayers of the pure and upright are prevailing prayers.*

In the next words God awakes, *Jam. 5. 16. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Fervency of prayer effects nothing, unless the person praying be righteous. God is not melted into compassion by the heat of our words, but by the holiness of our hearts. In the prayer of a righteous man there is strength, prevailing strength, such, as God himself yeilds to. *As a Prince thou hast power with God, and hast prevailed,* saith he to *Jacob*, when he wrestled with him. Observe,

Thirdly, *It is no way contrary to the doctrine of free-grace to say we must be holy, if we desire to be heard.*

Bildads doctrine is an excellent piece of Divinity, Though he said before, *Thou must seek unto God, and make supplication to him, that out of his free-grace he would bestow a blessing upon thee,* yet he adds, *If thou wert pure and upright.* Though we are not heard, because we are pure and upright, yet none can come with a warrantable confidence to be heard in their impurity and hypocrisie: if they do, God will reject their confidences, and they shall not prosper in them. It is impudence, not confidence, to make supplication to God with a reserve, or a resolve in secret, to go on in sinne. The greatest sinners in the world may come to God, they that are most impure and filthy, may find favour; yet every man that cometh unto God, must come with this desire, to have his impurities removed, and his backslidings healed. *Unto the wicked,* saith God, *What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or to take my covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee,* *Psal. 50. 16.* It no way crosses the doctrine of grace, when with the same breath we say, God will do us good freely for his own names sake, and that, we must be pure and upright who come to God: *With the pure thou wilt shew thy self pure, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thy self upright, and with the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward,* *Psal. 18. 25, 26.* But doth the Lord take colour from every one he meets, or change his tem-

per as the company changes? That's the weakness of sinful man, he cannot do so, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of changing. God is pure and upright with the unclean and hypocritical, as well as with the pure and upright, and his actions shew him to be so. God shewes himself froward with the froward, when he deals with them, as he hath said he will deal with the froward; deny them, and reject them. God shewes himself pure with the pure, when he deals with them as he hath said he will; hear them and accept them. Though there be nothing in purity and sincerity, which deserveth mercy, yet we cannot expect mercy without them. Our comforts are not grounded upon our graces, but our comforts are the fruits or consequents of our graces.

Bildad having shewed *Job* his duty, shews him a promise of mercy, *If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee.* There is a three-fold gradation of mercy in this promise.

- | | | | |
|----|----------------|---|---|
| 1. | That God would | { | Awake for him. |
| 2. | | | Prosper, or pacifie his habitation. |
| 3. | | | Abundantly encrease and multiply him in his latter end. |

The first step of mercy, is, *That God would awake for him.* Surely now he would awake for thee. And there are three things observable about this.

First, The certainty of it, in the word (*Surely*) without all doubt; or, peradventure if thou wouldest thus seek to him, *He would awake.*

Secondly, The speediness of it; *Surely now* he would awake, (*Now*) without delay or demur; thou shouldest no sooner seek to God, but finde an answer of mercy from him.

Thirdly, The benefit of it to *Job*, *He would awake for thee.* For *Job* might say, I may awaken a sleepey Lion to rise up against me; God may be angry with my prayer, and instead of blessing pour out some further judgement upon me: No, saith *Bildad*, I assure thee, if thou thus seek to him, *He will awake for thee*, not against thee.

God sometimes awakes against us, *Jer. 31. 28.* *It shall come to pass, that as I have watched over them, to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy, and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build and to plant, saith the Lord.* As the Lord would watch to do them a good turn; so he had watcht to do them (as we speak) a shrewd

turn.

turn. He threatens them with such a watchfulness, *Chap. 44. 27. I will watch over them for evil, and not for good.* When we are dull and sleepy in doing the will of God, he will be watchful and active to afflict us. And when men cannot sleep till they do evil, God will not sleep till he brings evil. So *Daniel*, in the ninth of that Prophetic and the 14 verse, having humbled himself before God in prayer and fasting, and confessed the sins of the people, concludes, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us.* God not only awakes, but watches to do a people evil, who have long abused his goodness; as men in maliciousness of spirit watch for advantages, and spie out opportunities to revenge themselves, *All my familiars watch for my halting,* saith *Jeremy*, *Chap. 20. 12.* So the Lord in abundant holiness and exactness of justice, though with a great deal of wrath and severity, watches to revenge himself of a wicked people. He takes all opportunities and advantages against them, *Thou hast watched evil, and brought it upon us.* His love to a returning people is as vigilant, as his anger against a backsliding people.

Surely now he would awake for thee.

Awake.) The word signifies both to awake, and to arise. There are two interpretations of this awaking.

Some take the words transitively, thus. *He will awake good for thee.* Not, of *Job* awakening God by prayer, but of God awakening prosperity, or stirring up blessings for *Job*. As if *Bildad* had said, *Job*, now blessings are (as it were) asleep, but if thou pray, God will awaken them; *He will stir up mercies for thee, he will cure thy broken condition, he will restore that which is fallen, repair that which is ruined, and fetch thee up out of the grave of thy desolate estate.* As a mans spirits, gifts, yea graces, are sometime asleep and need awakening, so also are, and do our outward comforts. It is frequent 'n Scripture to call the repairing of a mans estate, or the bringing of good to him, the raising of him up, *He raiseth the poor out of the dust;* he awakens them out of that low condition. *Job* was in the dust, and his children in the grave: God made a resurrection of both for him. That's a good sense.

But rather understand it (as our translation reads) of God *awakening*, *He will awake for thee.*

He will awake.) The Psalmist assures us (*Psal. 121. 4.*) *He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep.* God never sleepeth.

Suscitabit super te bonum. Transitive accipitur; excitabit super te, sc. bonum quod nunc in te sopitum est.

eth: How is it then said, that God awakes:

For the opening of this metaphor; First, As, The Church confesses and professes (Cant. 5. 2.) *I sleep, but my heart waketh*; when the Church is asleep, yet her heart is awake towards God: So much more, when in regard of outward providences God seems to be asleep, his heart is awake toward his Church, his heart (*scil.* his affection, &c.) never slumbereth nor sleepeth.

Secondly, God is said to sleep, when he doth not answer our prayers; and when he hears prayer, then he is said to awake. Hence the Septuagint render this text, not as we, *He will awake*; but, *He will hear thy prayer for deliverance*.

Δεήσεις ἐπα-
κούσταις.
Deprecationem
exaudiet tuam,
Sept.

Thirdly, God sleeps, not in regard of the act, but the consequents of sleep. Natural sleep is the binding or locking up of the senses. The eye and ear of God is never bound. But to mans apprehension the affairs of the world pass, as if God did neither hear nor see. When men are asleep things are done, which they can take no notice of, much less stop and prevent. The Parable tells us (Mat. 13.) *While men slept, the envious man came and sowed tares*: While the householder slept, the thief brake the house: and the Pharisees direct the watchmen to say of Christ in the sepulchre, *While we slept his Disciples came and stole him away*. So now, when things are so carried in the world, as if the God of heaven did not regard or take notice of them; when he doth not prevent or hinder evil; when he doth not stop or restrain the rage and malice of men; this retiring of himself in the way of his providence, is called his sleep.

Dormire vide-
tur cum te re-
linquit in his
calamitatibus.
Deus.

The complaint runs high, Psal. 44. 9, &c. *Lord, thou goest not forth with our Armies, we are become a reproach unto our enemies, Thou sellest thy people for nought; we are killed like sheep all the day long*. There's a description of the confusion of things, then followeth (vers. 23.) *Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, cast us not off for ever; wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression?* Such a time was accounted the sleeping time of God.

Hence when God in the workings of his providence, searcheth out the wicked, and brings them to destruction; when he breaks their designs, and turns their counsels backwards; when he turns their wickedness upon their own heads, and catches them in the snare which they have laid for others, then he is said to awake, Ps. 78. 65. *He gave his people over to the sword, and the fire consumed the young*

young men; then the Lord awakened as one out of sleep, and like a giant refreshed with wine, He smote his enemies in the hinder parts, and put them to a perpetual shame. Such a time was accounted Gods waking time.

So then, sleeping and awaking, note only the changes of providence. Hence also the providence of God is described by *an eye* (2 Chron. 16. 9.) which is the proper organ of sleeping, or waking; and the exactness of providence, is set out by *seven eyes*, Zech. 3. 9. The Scripture speaks this language in reference to our soul-sleep and awakening. When we sin and let things go which way they will in our hearts, without taking any care, or keeping our watch against temptation, then we are asleep in sinne: And when we begin to consider our estates, and return to our selves, when we take notice how it is with us, and ask our hearts the question, *What have we done?* This in a spiritual sense is our awakening, *Awake thou that sleepest*, Ephes. 5. 14. Our spiritual sleeping and waking are the decayes or quicknings of soul-endeavours. And Gods providential sleeping and waking are the seeming stops and visible motions of his power, mercy, and justice in the world. This is the awakening which Bildad promises. *If thou wouldest seek God, &c. Surely he would awake for thee.*

The words opened teach us.

First, *That holy prayer shall certainly be heard.*

If thou make thy supplication to him, surely he will awake. God cannot sleep when a poor believing soul cries in his ears, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer* (Psal. 66. 18.) But verily God hath heard me, he hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. What, God turn prayer away? No, he cannot lie still (as I may so speak) when prayer knocks at the door, he must arise and open presently. That's a second note,

Prayer shall be heard presently.

What presently? Yes, presently heard, though not presently answered; *Surely now he will awaken for thee, even now.* Holy prayers are never deferred the hearing, no not a minute, *Isa. 65. 24. Before they call I will hear, and while they are yet speaking I will answer.* In the very act of praying the answer came forth: yea the answer sometimes antedates our asking, and the grant cometh before the petition. The giving out of the answer may be deferr'd, but the answer is not deferr'd. We may be heard, and heard graciously, and yet not presently receive the thing we ask; but e-

very

very prayer is heard and laid up, as soon as put up; he hangs it upon the file, he hath it safe by him. Prayer receives an answer in heaven, as soon as spoken upon earth, though the answer be not returned to us on earth. *God sleeps not at the prayer of those who are awake in Prayer.* Thirdly, Observe,

Prayer is the best means to awaken God.

God hath many wayes to awaken man; and he hath directed man a way to awaken himself. When we are asleep he awakeneth us chiefly two wayes. First, by the voice of his word: Secondly, by the voice of his rod. He now awakens us by the loud sounding trumpet, and the alarms of warre: when God awakeneth us by judgements, it is time for us to awaken him by prayer. We find two things in Scripture which awaken God. First, the prayers of his own people. And secondly, the rage and blasphemy of his enemies, *Psal. 78. 65.* The Prophet having described the cruelty and rage of the enemy, adds; *Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine: David makes this an argument in prayer, (Psal. 7.) Because of the rage of mine enemies awake for me to the judgement which thou hast commanded.* As if he had said, Lord, shall mine enemies rage, and wilt thou sleep? Wilt not thou awake for me? Arise, I pray thee. The noise of blasphemy, and the cry of violence from wicked men, stir up God when he seems to lie asleep. The noise of prayer, the cries and calls of faith in his own people, will not let him sleep. A man whose heart is drenched in the world, and drowned in rivers of earthly pleasures, prayes himself asleep, and his prayers bring God asleep to: he sleeps when he prayes, and God sleeps at his prayers, that is, God regards not his prayer; he is as one that sleepeth, as if he heard not what was said. A worldly man doth not hear what he speaks, he knows not what his own requests are. God sleepeth when men are thus asleep. But when we (as the Apostle directs) *watch and pray*, then God awakes at our prayers. As in the former verse *Job* was counselled to awake to pray to God, so now he is promised, That the Lord will awake when he prayeth.

Fourthly, Seeing the Lord is awakened by prayer. We learn, That

Prayer ought to be very strong and fervent.

As men are gradual in their sleep, so is the Lord in his. A man is sometimes so slumberingly asleep that the least noise will awake him, you cannot stir, but he will hear it. At another time a man is
so

so dead asleep, that though you hollow in his ear you cannot awake him, thunder cannot stir him. Sometimes God departs so little, that the least voice calleth him again, he comes at the first word; at another time he is gone so far, that (as to a man in a deep sleep) you must cry and cry again, call and call again, cry aloud before he hears. And we may (in a safe sense) apply that to the true God, which *Elijah* did to that false god *Baal*; when his Priests were calling to him from morning to night, *Elijah* mocking, bids them cry aloud, *it may be* (saith he) *he sleepeth*: We may say (with reverence) thus when any pray to God, and he doth not hear, pray aloud; not in regard of the voice and outward sound, but pray with louder desires of heart, with more fervency and zeal of spirit, *Peradventure God sleepeth*; peradventure he is in a deep sleep at this time, and he will not suddenly be awakened, therefore cry aloud. When God seemed to depart far from the Church of the *Jews*, with how much fervency do they cry after him (*Isa. 51. 9.*) *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake, as in the ancient &c.* They double and treble it upon him, and cry with an out-stretched voice, *Art not thou he that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* What a clamour, what a holy stir was here, to awaken God? God himself sometimes seems (as it were) willing to take his rest, as when he said to *Moses*, *Let me alone*; he spake like a man that is in bed, or very sleepy, *Do not trouble me, let me alone*; as he in the Gospel (*Luk. 11. 7.*) when he was awakened in the night to come and give bread unto his neighbours, *Do not trouble me* (saith he) *the doors are shut, and I am in bed with my children, I cannot rise and give thee, let me alone.* Thus in some sense the Lord expresses himself to his people, *I am now in bed, do not trouble me, Let me alone.* What must we do in this case? We must knock harder at the door, as he in the Gospel did, *For whom, though his neighbour would not rise and give him because he was his friend, yet because of his importunity he rises and gives him as many loaves as he needed.* We must be the more importunate to awake God, by how much he seems more unwilling to hear us; our modesty (in this case) pleases him not: we must call and call again: He will take it well at our hands, if we do so. We must give our selves no rest, and let him take none; so the Prophet resolves (*Isa. 62. 1.*) *For Jerusalem's sake, I will take no rest, I will never give over praying; and at the sixth verse, I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace*

day nor night, you that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. If the Lord should carry it in the present answers of his providences, as if he were willing to rest, and desired not to be troubled in this business; be not you so put off: but with a holy boldness and confidence come to him and awaken him: take no answer, till ye have an answer. He is best pleased and most at ease, when (in prayer) we give him no rest. Lastly, Observe,

If God do but awake for us, all is presently well with us.

If the eye of God be upon us for good, that brings us in all good: therefore (Zech. 2. ult.) when the Church was in her return from Babylon, the Prophet concludes with an exultation of spirit, *Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord, for he is raised up out of his holy habitation; it is this word, he is awaked out of his holy habitation, now be silent, O all flesh before the Lord: All flesh, ye that are the wicked of the world, ye that are enemies, be ye silent, leave your boasting, your reproaching and blaspheming, for the Lord is awaked, now he begins to stir for his people, he will stop your mouths shortly: All flesh, takes in the Church and people of God too, O be ye silent, in regard of your fears and doubtings, murmurings and distracted complainings, silence all these, why? The Lord is awaked, he is raised up out of his holy habitation; that is, he that seemed before to confine himself to those higher regions; and as the Atheist speaks in Job, to walk in the circle of the Heavens, not intermeddling with the earth: This God is now awaked, he is raised out of his holy habitation, and now ye shall know that he orders all things here below: therefore be silent, O all flesh. When Christ was asleep (Mat. 8. 25.) *A greivous tempest arose (saith the text) insomuch as the Ship was covered with waves.* When storms and tempests are upon the Church, God is then asleep, though even then he directs the storms, and gives law to the proud waves. But what did the Disciples in this storm? *They awoke Christ; Master, save us, we perish;* and as soon as ever Christ was awakened, *He rebuked the storm, and there was a great calm.* Thus when we are tost up and down with contrary windes and in danger to be split and sunk, if God once awake, all is calm. *How quietly may they sleep for whom God wakes!* I do not say they should sleep carelessly, but confidently they may. God doth not wake for us, to the intent we should sleep in security; but we may sleep quietly, when he shewes himself awake for us,*

who

who (indeed) never slumbreth nor sleepeth. And if God awake not for us, all our watchfulness is as useless to us as our sleepiness, The watchmen waketh but in vain, except the Lord keep the City. Except he awake our watching can do no good; and if he awake, good will come, though we be asleep. It is our duty to be careful, and it is our comfort that the care of God is enough for us. The eye of divine providence helps us in many humane improvidences. What their happiness is for whom God awakes, see in the next words,

He will make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

This is the second degree or step of mercy promised; when the Lord awakes, he will awake to purpose. We say of some men, *Early up and never the near*; they awake, and do little work: but if God awakes, see what he doth,

He will make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

Some of the *Rabbins* understand these words as a description of the soul; *the habitation of thy righteousness*, that is, *thy soul shall prosper*, because the soul is the proper seat of righteousness and holiness. Righteousness belongeth to the inward man, Righteousness being a spiritual thing, is housed and lodged in the spirit, that's the habitation of it.

Anima est justitiae & omnium virtutum domicilium. Aben. Ezr.

There are others of the *Jews*, who take this *habitation of righteousness* for the body, because the body is the habitation of the soul, in which righteousness is seated, and so the *habitation of righteousness* by a second remove is the outward man. The Lord shall bless thy body, which now lieth in a woful plight, distempered and disfigured with sores and sicknesses.

But rather take the word *habitation* in those two ordinary Scripture-senses, either strictly for the place where *Job* dwelt; or more largely for all that belong unto him. The habitation of a man, is all his estate, and all that appertains to his estate; *He will make thy habitation*, that is, thy children, thy servants, thy fields, thy cattel, thy stock, thy all, to be prosperous.

The Chaldee Paraphrase readeth, *He will make thy beautiful place to be prosperous*. The word signifies *beauty* as well as an *habitation*, as was shewed, upon Chap. 5. ver. 3. thither I refer the Reader. Then, *habitation* is the seat of a mans outward estate, and his estate: the shell and the kernel, the outside and inside of all he hath.

Significat domum vel speciem pulchritudinem justitiae. Tac.

The habitation of righteousness.

Quasi nihil a-
liud quam ac-
quitatem &
justitiam redo-
leant boni
juste acquista
Merc.
Ἰσχυροσυνήκ-
ουσι μὲν ἀρε-
τας, ἀλλὰ ἐν
ἀρετῇ. Arist.
Ethic. 1. 5. c. 1.

That is, the habitation where righteousness doth flourish, or wherein thou livest righteously.

But what is righteousness?

Righteousness is a very comprehensive word. The Philosopher tells us, it takes in all other virtues whatsoever, *It is not a part of virtue, but all virtue.*

When righteousness is set as distinct from holiness and piety, then it is restrained to our dealings with men. *Righteousness relates to men, and holiness to God, Luk. 1. 75. Tit. 2. 12.* Gospel-grace, teaches us to live soberly, in opposition to the intemperance of our bodies: *righteously*, in opposition to wrong in our actions; *godly*, in opposition to all impiety and prophaneness of our minds.

But righteousness here takes in our whole duty, whether to God or man, *The habitation of thy righteousness*; that is, the place where thou exercisest all manner of holy and righteous duties toward God and toward man. Righteousness toward man, first, in distributive justice, giving every one his due in judgement, as thou art a Magistrate: Secondly, Righteousness towards man in commutative justice, giving every one his due in commerce, as thou art a neighbour.

The habitation of thy righteousness.

It is an elegant expression. The Church is sometimes called so, *Jer. 31. 23. Thus saith the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, as yet they shall use this speech in the land of Judah, and in the Cities thereof, when I shall bring again their captivity. The Lord bless thee O habitation of righteousness, and mountain of holiness.* This speech they shall use: It seems it had been an ordinary salutation thus to bespeak Judah, *O thou habitation of justice or righteousness, and mountain of holiness.* Every particular member of the Church is named, *A tree of righteousness, Isa. 61. 3. They shall be called trees of righteousness, the plantation of the Lord.* Each Saint is a tree of righteousness, and all of them together are an habitation, a plantation of righteousness.

God himself is stiled, *The habitation of righteousness*, because he (in a way of highest excellency, or in the most superlative degree) is the seat of righteousness; all righteousness is (as it were) housed,

housed, and dwelling in him. The Prophet (Jer. 50. 7.) describing the unkind usuage which the true worshipers should find in the dayes of which he prophesieth, speaks thus, *All that found them have devoured them, and their adversaries said, we offend not, because they have sinned against the Lord: They thought their brethren had sinned against the Lord, and that therefore they might trouble them without sin; They have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers. It is but justice (say they) for us to punish those, who sin against the habitation of justice. Men (take it in passage) do evil sometimes out of conscience, and think they do God good service, while they really wrong their brethren.*

He shall make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. That is, he shall make it peaceable and quiet, settled and established. The word signifies peace, plenty and prosperity. He shall pacifie or quiet the habitation of thy righteousness. The Septuagint thus, *He shall restore it to, or repair it for thee.*

There are three things in that word. It may note,

1. The quietness of all within his family. There shall be peace and a good agreement in thy habitation.

2. The abundance, the fruitfulness, the great encrease of all within his family, he will make thee thrive.

3. The peaceable holding or enjoyment of all those good things, free from forraign invasion or oppressions. Do thus, and then neither *Sabeans* nor *Chaldeans* shall any more come upon thee and plunder thee. Thus he will make the *habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.*

The sum of all is, as if *Bildad* had said unto *Job*: *Thy habitation hath heretofore been an habitation of unrighteousness, of impiety, of tyranny, thy house hath been filled with spoyl and oppression, thy Tabernacle hath been a Sanctuary for wickedness, a lodging or rendezvous for all manner of riot and intemperance, of rapine & injustice; but now, Job, if thou wilt make thy self pure and upright, thou shalt see the case will alter; whereas before troops and armies of miseries have invaded thee, and spoyled all thou hadst within and without; now, if in thy house, where wickedness formerly dwelt, righteousness shall enter and dwell, thou shalt see that with righteousness peace will enter too; troubles will depart, when wickedness departs, and evils of punishment will dislodge with the evil of sin; when those better guests, righteousness and holiness come into, and are welcom'd*

פליא
Pacifiabit, pacatum reddet, i. e. integrum, perfectum, omnibus bonis re- dundans, qualis affert pau. αἰσχρογυνήσῃ δὲ οὐδὲ. Sept.

Ubi facta fuerit morum & studiorum, fiet etiam magna fortunæ conversio.

then

then thy house shall be better; when thy heart, and thy life change thy estate shall change; and those comforts which have so long been strangers from thee shall return; thy banish'd mercies shall come home again, adorn thy walls, and strengthen thy family.

This is the sum of what he promiseth in these words, *He will make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.* Hence observe,

First, *Prosperity is in the power of God.*

If he awakes he can make us prosperous and peacefull. If he do but speak the word our captivity shall return. He saith to a dry stick, flourish, and to a green tree, wither: his word is cloathed with power to do good or evil.

Secondly, Observe, *A righteous habitation shall be a prosperous habitation.*

Whether we respect persons, families or nations, thus it is in the ordinary dispensations of God. As in regard of our spiritual and eternal estate, *The work of righteousness is peace* (Isa. 32. 17.) so, in regard of our temporal and outward. Christ who is the *Prince of righteousness*, is also the *Prince of Peace*. He brought righteousness into the world, and then peace came into the world. If he had not made an habitation of righteousness in the world, there had never been an habitation of peace in the world: in that work of his, the foundation of our prosperity was laid. Jesus Christ who as a Priest purchased our peace, is also, *The King of righteousness*. Blessings crown the head of a righteous people (Jer. 31. 23.) *They shall say, the Lord bless thee, O habitation of righteousness.* If thou art a habitation of righteousness, a blessing shall rest upon thee; *The Kingdome of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the holy Ghost*, Rom. 14. 17. as the spiritual Kingdome of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Ghost: So the joy and peace of worldly Kingdoms is not meat and drink, but righteousness. When Kingdoms are holy habitations, they will soon be quiet habitations. In Isa. 26. 2. *Open ye the gates that the righteous Nation which keepeth the truth may enter in; thou shalt keep him in perfect peace.* God will give and preserve the peace of the righteous. Righteousness is the pillar of a State, and the parent of peace. *The mountains* (Psal. 72. 3.) *shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness.* Plant righteousness upon barren hills and Mountains, and peace will flourish there.

I might hence infer a corollary, by the rule of contraries, That *Unrighteousness makes unprosperous and unpeaceable habitations.* An habitation of idolatry and false worship, an habitation of cruelty and hard dealing, shall be an habitation for owls and shreech-owls, a dwelling place for every unclean bird and beast; these shall take up their lodging within such walls, and make their nests in such chambers.

Whilst we are fill'd, as the Apostle characterizeth the Gentiles, (*Rom. 1.*) *with all unrighteousness*; it is no marvel if we are filled with all trouble. The Prophet *Malachi* brings in *Edom* thus reflecting upon himself (*Chap. 1. 4.*) whereas *Edom* saith, *I am impoverished, &c.* *Edom* began to be sensible all was not well with him. Hereupon he advises upon a way to help himself, and concludes thus, *We will return and build the desolate places.* This was their resolve; but what saith God to it? Even this, will ye build, ye shall build, I will give you leave to build, but *I will throw it down again, I will spoyl your work.* Why would the Lord be thus severe? The next words give a reason, *They shall call thee, the border of wickedness, the people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.* Wickedness is a large word, and takes in all unrighteousness towards man, as well as impiety towards God. *That building cannot stand long, where unrighteousness lies between the timber and the stones. God will pull down by night, what such men build by day.* If then we would have buildings stand, and our habitations prosperous, let us labour to build with justice, and make ours the habitations of righteousness. Look upon it in families, that which withers the comfort of a family, in children, in servants, is the unrighteousness found in a family; if there be unrighteousness there, no wonder if there be decays and discontents there too. If there be unrighteousness in Cities; If (*Psal. 55. 11.*) *deceit and guile go not out of our streets, no marvel, if complainings go not out of our streets.* We call for peace and prosperity, O that peace would come! but if our hearts were set upon this, if we laboured every one with himself, and every one with his brother, and every one with the publick to the uttermost of his line, that we may in our persons, in our families, in our policies, be an habitation of righteousness; how soon should we all be a prosperous habitation, an habitation of peace?

Two things make a Nation an habitation of righteousness.

First,

First, When right is done speedily.

Secondly, when right is done impartially.

Tedious delays make Courts prisons of righteousness, not habitations of righteousness. Partial distributions shew a place to be a market of righteousness (where he shall have it that bids most for it) not an habitation of righteousness, where every one ought to have it that comes for it; *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgement* (saith the Law, Levit. 19. 15.) how shall they avoid it? the next words give direction, *Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty.* Righteousness takes not notice of the persons of men, but of their causes. We must not do unrighteously in charity to the poor, as well as not in hopes or for gifts from the rich.

Again, The Hebrew signifies a beautiful habitation. Righteousness loves to dwell in a fair house. It is so, when, first swept from bribes, these are filth in the house, and the corrupters of righteousness.

Secondly, A beautiful house hath store of lights in it. Justice and truth love not corners and close cells. Justice must act clearly: men cannot bear it, that, what falls upon their senses should not be in the light of their understandings. God hath secret judgements, but man must not. One potsherd must shew another, why he forms or breaks him thus in judgement.

Lastly, The beauty of the house of justice arises from good Laws, and good men to execute them. Righteousness cannot act without a rule; and rules cannot act themselves. Good Laws without good Magistrates never made any people a habitation of righteousness. It is not good Laws, but good men which make a Kingdom happy. Now, as unrighteousness makes a strong people weak, a rich people poor, an honourable people base, a great estate to decrease, and come to nothing: So righteousness makes a weak people strong, a poor people rich, a mean people honourable, a little estate encrease and come to much. Thus *Bildad* assures *Job* with his next breath.

Verse 7. *Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly encrease.*

This is the third gradation. God will not only awake for thee, and make thee prosperous, but he will greatly encrease thee. Thou shalt not only be set in as good a condition as thou wast, but in a far better.

Though

Though thy beginning were small.

Though the head of thy estate (so the Hebrew) though the first of thy estate were small.

רשית
A quo quid incipit.

The word *small*, notes a smallness either in quantity or in quality; and it is opposed to a double greatness (Gen. 25. 3.) *Jacob* and *Esau* are thus distinguished, the one shall be *great*, the other *small*, which we translate, the *Elder shall serve the younger*; the greater shall serve the less.

Though thy beginning was small.) The City that *Lot* desired (Gen. 19.) is called *Zoar*, from this word, *Is it not a little one?* Though thy estate were but a *Zoar*, a little one, yet it shall be built of a larger compass.

The Septuagint raises the sense of the latter clause, *Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end shall be ineffable, such as none shall be able to tell over or describe.* Thy estate shall be beyond account.

τα ἄρχεται οὐ
ἀμύθια, Sept.

A Question arises how we are to make this comparison between *Jobs beginning and latter end*? Whether we are to refer it to the estate he had before his affliction, compared with what he should have after his affliction; or, whether we are to understand it of the augmentation and encrease of his estate after his affliction, which at the beginning should be but small, but afterwards should receive a mighty augmentation. The sense is good either way.

First, If we understand it of his estate before and after his troubles compared together; Though thy beginning or the first estate which God gave thee were small, yet thy latter end, or the estate which God will give thee, when these storms are over-blown, shall wonderfully encrease.

Against this it may be objected, How can the former estate of *Job* be called *small*, when as it is said (Chap. 1.) that *Job* had a very vast estate? We have heard the inventory of his goods, the total summe or apprizement of all, being given in by God himself, *That Job was the greatest of all the men in the East.* How then can it be said, that his first estate was small? *Though thy beginning were small.*

I answer, comparatively it may be called small. An exceeding excess of greatness, lessens and littles any other greatness. The Moon is a great light, but the light of the Sun makes that light darkness. That which is glorious hath no glory, by reason of the glory that excelleth; he that is rich or

great hath no riches or greatness, by reason of riches and greatness which excel. *Job* had a fair estate before, and was the greatest man of all the men of the East; but his estate is promised to be such as shall obscure the former, and render it inconsiderable. Accordingly, it is said, in the story of his restoring (Chap. 42. 10.) *That the Lord turned the captivity of Job; also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.* Half is but a little to the whole. And at the 12. verse, *The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.* Which words are a good exposition upon the text in hand. When *Joseph* sent for his father and brethren to come into *Ægypt* (Gen. 45. 20.) he saith, but *as for your stuff, do not regard that, for the good of all the land of Ægypt is before you.* *Joseph* knew his Father was a rich man. *Jacob* was no beggar: but let all that go for nothing; leave it to those that will take it up, all the good of *Ægypt* is before you; what is all you have to the riches of *Ægypt*? That's the first sense.

Observe from it, That

The Lord is able to repair all our losses with abundant advantages.

We complain of losses; I have lost a great estate, saith one, but the Lord is able to give thee such an estate, as that the greatness of the former shall not be remembred.

Secondly, *They who lose much, usually have great repairs.*

Job was great above all others in the East, but now he shall be made greater then himself. As in spirituals, they that have, to them more shall be given, and they shall have more abundance; so they that lose much in temporals, to them more is given sometimes then they have lost, and they shall have abundance.

There is a second sense, to which the letter of the original doth rather incline, which makes both parts of the verse look only to his second estate, namely, his restauration: and so the sense is this, *Though thou dost not presently thrive and grow up to a great estate, yet afterward thou shalt; Though after this breaking and undoing thou shouldst set up (as it were) but with a little stock, one friend bringing thee a peece of silver, another a peece of gold, a third a jewel, all making a purse for thee: and so thou beginnest but upon alms and charity, yet thy latter end shall greatly encrease.* As if *Bildad* had said, *Though God should now begin to comfort, and restore thee, but with small matters, yet do not think he will so conclude with thee, he hath enough in store.* The letter of the o-

original is most clear for this, the words being assertive, rather than suppositive, *Thy beginning shall be small, and thy latter end shall greatly encrease*: which refers to the time future, not past, as we and others translate.

Hence observe, *That*

The Lord doth usually raise his people by degrees.

They do not receive all at once. It is true of persons, families, and Nations. We must not look for all in a day. Outward mercies may come too fast upon us, there may be a glut of them. We may have more than we know how to order or take in, it may do hurt to receive all together. As it is with men that have been long pined with famine and hunger, and are grown out of their ordinary course, by reason of their necessitated abstinence: We do not presently give them all manner of good cheer, or bring them to a full table, and let them eat as much as they will; but we give them a little and a little at a time, and so by degrees bring their stomachs on, till they be wrought for plenty. So when the Lord brings persons or nations very low, he doth not bring in a glut of mercies at first, this would be more then they are able to bear; they may be undone, if they have all at one receipt; but he gives as they are able to take them in, and make a right use of them. As *Jacob* said to *Esau* his brother, when he invited him to march with him; no, saith *Jacob*, I cannot march thy pace, I must consider what my train is, I have flocks here that are great with young, *And if I should over-drive them one day, they would all die: therefore* (saith he) *I will lead on softly, according as the cattel that are before me, and the children be able to endure.* So it is in this case, the Lord in infinite wisdom gives, as men are able to receive. *We may be over-mercied, as well as over-afflicted; over-laden with comforts, as well as with sorrows.* And therefore as the Lord doth correct in judgement and in measure: so also doth he restore. We have not full-tide in a moment, or in a quarter of an hour: it would be terrible, dangerous and troublesome, if when it is low water we should have full tide in a moment; but it comes in stealing by degrees, and at last it swells all over the banks. Such a stealing flood of mercies the Lord gives his people.

Therefore be caution'd. In the returns of mercy do not despise small things. Your beginnings may be inconsiderable, this is but a little, and that is but a little, but do not despise the first

Cum dicat, erit, satis indicat se loqui de in bonis, quæ habiturus est, si respuerit, non de in quæ habuit, ante hanc tempestatem. Druf. Sic solet Deus ditare suos, non uno tempore simul, sed paulatim: Et ut Itali dicunt, poco à poco, Galli, peu à peu. Idem.

or second little. So the Prophet counsels (*Zech. 4.10.*) *Despise not the day of small things*: The beginnings of mercy were scarce discernable, and they looked upon them as nothing, they thought they would never come to any thing. Take heed (saith the Prophet) do not despise small things, there's more a coming. Hast thou but a little? Doth God make but some little repairs of outward comforts? Do not sleight these, look upon them as the beginnings of greater things. When *Elijah* sent his servant to go and look toward the Sea whether he saw any sign of rain, he at last brought him word that he saw a little cloud arise out of the Sea, as big as a mans hand: would any one think that a prognostick of great rain? *Elijahs* servant might despise this, and say this is no sign of rain; but *Elijah* knew better, that little assured him there was a mighty shower at hand, he knew how it would work presently: Go, bid *Abab* prepare his Chariot, and get him down, that the rain stop him not. Thus it is, respecting daily providences; if you see a mercy coming but as big as a mans hand, be persuaded that the Lord sends it as a forerunner, as that which shall usher in large and extensive mercies. If we see the glimmering light of day break, we are not angry, because it is not presently high noon, or, because we have not full light, we know the light will come by degrees. *Thy beginning shall be small, but thy latter end shall greatly encrease.*

J O B, Chap. 8. Vers. 8, 9, 10.

For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thy self to the search of their fathers.

(For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing; our dayes upon earth are a shadow)

Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

WE have opened the first argument, by which *Bildad* confirms his proposition laid down at the third verse, *That God is just*; both from the example of Gods dealing with *Jobs* children, *vers. 4.* and from what God was ready to do for him, in the *5, 6, and 7. verses.*

The context now read contains a second general argument to prove the former assertion, and it is grounded upon the testimony or authority of the Ancients; as if *Bildad* had said thus, *I will not press thee with my own bare sentence, and say-so, with my own reason and authority, but I wish thee to search the records of former times, to consult the wisest and the holiest men that ever were in the world, and let them judge in this case. Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy self to the search of their fathers.*

It is here observable that *Bildad* manages his counsel by the same arguments which *Eliphaz* had used before him: *Eliphaz* bid *Job* (*Enquire who ever perished being innocent, Chap. 4.*) and promises him peace upon repentance (*Chap. 5. 23, 24.*) *Bildad* runs the same strain, *If thou wert pure, &c.* and here, *Enquire of the former age, &c.*

The strength of his argument may be cast into this forme.

That is true which the holiest and wisest in all antiquity with one mouth and one consent agree in.

But the holiest and wisest in all antiquity agree in this, that God is just.

Therefore this is a truth.

Hereupon he inferreth, that God had dealt justly with *Job* in consuming his estate, in destroying his children, and in afflicting his person. That's the logical meaning or argument of these three verses.

Enquire

Enquire I pray thee.

לְקַח
Significat petere,
ve, postulare &
quidem cum
precibus. Etiam
sciscitari in du-
bis.
Do persona, sic
consulere: de
rebus sic pete-
re. Merc.

The word notes a very earnest, and a diligent search or enquiry: To enquire with industry, yea, with importunity. The grave hath it's name in Hebrew from this word, and so hath Hell; because the grave (as it were) calls for, or enquires after all flesh; and Hell with much earnestness gapes for wicked men, *Eccl. 2. 10. Whatsoever mine eyes desired.* The eye is a strong asker.

It is applied sometimes to persons, and then it signifies, to enquire or consult what is to be done. Sometimes it is applied to things, and then it signifies, to ask that a thing may be done. Prayer is an enquiry after God, and the things of God, *1 Sam. 1. 17, 20, 27.* This word is used about *Hannah's* prayer to God for a child, *Hannah conceived and bare a Son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord.*

Further, The word is applied to God, when he enquires after, or asks somewhat of us, as if he made his request and sute to us, (*Deut. 10. 12.*) *And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee?* Or, what doth he enquire after in thee? It is this, *To fear the Lord thy God, &c.*

Here, *to enquire*, is to use all endeavours and means to find out the best informations and resolutions, which the fathers in those former ages were able to give *Job* in the controversie then a foot between him and his friends, *Enquire, I pray thee,*

Of the former age.

γενεῖς ἀπὸ
ἀρχῆς.

אֲחִיזָה
à radice.
Continuè
& successivè
vixit, duravit:
sensu & sono
idem quod & or
latina. Duro.

By the former, we are not to understand those that were immediately preceding only, or those that were preceding for some few generations past, but as the Septuagint well renders it, by former generations, we may understand *the first generation*; begin at the first, and so come down all along, begin as high as thou canst. Enquire not only of those who lived since the flood, but of all who have been since God created man upon the earth; draw the line of thy search thorow all ages, and thou shalt find the pedigree of this truth from age to age, from generation to generation. *Enquire, I pray thee, of the former*

Age.

This word Age, is taken three wayes.

1. For the whole space of mans life; which, when it is doubled, signifies

signifies a very long life, *Psal. 61.7. Thou shalt prolong the Kings life* (or, according to the letter of the Hebrew, thou shalt adde dayes to the dayes of the King) *and his years as many generations*; or, as generation and generation, age and age: long and long, that is, very long; Two lives, or two mens ages, being (as it were) laid into one.

2. For some special part of mans life. Mans life is divided into severall ages. Some divide it into four, alluding to the four parts of the year. Some, into five, infancy, childehood, youth, mans-estate, and old-age; comparing them to the five acts of an interlude, the Prologue whereof is infancy, and the Epilogue decrepid old-age. Others into seven, in allusion to the seven Planets.

3. It is taken for an age of men, or the state of the time present. So in the Gospel, Christ calleth the Scribes and Pharisees, *A generation of vipers, and an adulterous generation.* As if he had said; You of this time and age of the world, are a viperous and an adulterous brood. So *Psal. 14.5. God is in the generation of the righteous*: That is, he favours that generation, or sort of men; God is in all generations, but such he delights in most; the wicked have cause enough to fear those, in whom God delights.

That of the Prophet (which text hath variety of interpretations) is taken in this sense (*Isa. 53.8. Who shall declare his generation?*) It is the word of the text, *Who shall declare his age, or the generation of Christ?* Some understand it of his eternal generation. Others of his temporal generation, when he was incarnate, the mystery whereof was beyond words. A third, of that eternity which followed his passion. As if it were an Antithesis to those words, *He was taken from prison, and he was cut off, but who shall declare his generation?* You may quickly write up the dayes that Christ lived here upon earth, they were but few, even *his pilgrimage* was short on earth, but who can declare his generation? Those infinite and eternal ages and revolutions, thorow which he shall pass, though now you have quickly cut off his life: Others, by his *generation* understand the holy seed and issue, the children of Christ. His Cross was fruitful, and his sufferings productive of an infinite generation, *Who can declare it?* Though you cut off the Father, yet this father by dying will give life to an innumerable posterity, *Who can declare his generation?* So (vers. 10.) *He shall see his seed.* But besides all these we may with good probability inter-

Ætatem vo-
cant Hebræi
genus hominum
simul viventium,
sic ætas
prava, adul-
tera.

Apud Græcos
γένος signifi-
cat intervallum
septem anno-
rum, unde me-
dicæ vetant du-
as ætates ha-
benti, i.e. an-
nos quatuor de-
cim nro ve-
nam incidit,
quod sanguine
egest. Suidas.

pret.

Quis cogitare
qui dicere po-
test, quam per-
vixi fuerint
homines, qui
tempore ejus
vixuri sint.
Pined.

pret the word *generation* for the time when Christ sojourned in the flesh, *Who can declare his generation?* That is, who can describe the time or the age wherein Christ lived? As if he had said, you see here in this glass of prophecy how they will use Christ, how bloudily and cruelly they will deal with him, he shall be imprisoned, he shall be cut off and numbred among transgressours, *Who can declare his generation?* What pen is able with lively colours to paint out the several wickednesses and tyrannies of that age, acted against, and inflicted upon that holy and innocent lamb *Jesus Christ*, who came to die for the sins of the world? Surely his generation, or the story of his age will be such, as no pen is to able draw out, or fully to delineate, *Who shall declare his age?*

The age which *Bildad* calls *Job* to enquire into, is not a part of mans life, or the whole life of a man, or one age of men, or state of times, but the whole space of time from the very beginning, with all things done or suffered, and the persons who have been active or passive, doers or sufferers in those times. *Thus enquire of the former age.*

The reason why he called him to enquire of the former age, was, because in those times the will of God was not reduced to writing. The divinity of the first ages was traditional; The Scriptures were not composed for more than 2000 years after the creation, but the mind of God was either immediatly revealed, or carried from father to son, from generation to generation; being preserved, not in paper and ink, or other formal records, but in the memories and hearts of the faithful, until the giving of the Law. Hence it was that *Bildad* refers *Job* to those revelations, or to the experiences of the fathers concerning the dealings of God in former ages.

Columnæ duæ
in scripta à no-
bis: ibi Ada-
mi, characteres
quosdam &
figuras mahe-
maticas, pro si-
dium observa-
tione totius
quadrantem hi-
s o iam, aut ex-
quisitam de Deo
& ejus provi-
dentia doctri-
nam habuisse
dicuntur. Be-
rosus. l. 8. Ant.

Berosus in his eighth book of *Antiquities*, reports that the fathers after *Adam* set up two great pillars, upon which, some affirm they inscribed many divine truths: but he tells us that those pillars (of which some monuments were seen after the flood) were filled rather with Astronomical observations, Mathematical schemes of the heavens and figures of stars; we cannot put much value upon either of these opinions. The former cannot warrant us that any thing was registred and written by Gods appointment, till the writing of the Law. And therefore *Bildad*, according to the usage of those times, sends *Job* for information to the traditions and reports of the fathers. For after the Law was written, the Prophets, in case of emergent doubts and controversies, sent the peo-
ple

ple, not to the traditions or experiences of former ages, but, *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light, or no morning in them, Isa. 8. 20.* The word once written was the rule, and though it cannot speak, yet it must teach us how to speak. If we speak not according to this, there is no light in us. But the word not being written, *Bildad* advises *Job* well, *Enquire of the former age,*

And prepare thy self to the search of their fathers.

Having counsel'd him to *enquire of the former age*; he addeth, *Prepare thy self to the search of their fathers*; as if he had said, though I bid thee enquire, yet I would not have thee rush hand over head upon this enquiry, *Prepare thy self.* The word signifies to lay a good foundation; *Due preparations are the foundations of action.* Hence it signifies also to establish; because a matter is established and confirmed by wise preparations, and considerate addressees to it. Those things stand fastest about which we make not too much haste. Further, the word signifies the fixing of the mind, *Fix thy heart upon this work*; keep thy spirits intent (*Psal. 108. 1.*) *My heart is fixed* (saith *David*, which some render, *My heart is prepared*) *I will sing and give praise. Prepare thy self*

כונן
Fundare, aptare, parare, ordinare, stabilire significat.

To the search of their Fathers.

Before he advised him to enquire of the former age, here, *To search their fathers*; as if he had said, do not confine thy self to the immediately fore-passed times, but go as high as thou canst: The former age (as was touched upon that passage) may include all times past; but here to avoid all mistakes, he gives it in expressly. The fathers of the former age, are the fathers of every age. All that have lived before us, come under the relation of our fathers. The fathers were dead, but they lived in their monuments and works: these he must search, so far as any mark or remembrance of them could be found. Hence observe,

First, *That as it is a duty in all, so it was a custome in ancient times, carefully to record the dealings of God with them, for the use of ensuing generations.*

To what end should *Job* search, if nothing were to be found; The Jewes were commanded to remember the works of God for their learning after the word was written, *Psal. 78. 5.* He established a testimony in *Jacob*, &c. *That they should make them known*

to their Children. God hath always had a book of his acts and monuments, as well as of his laws and institutions. Names given to children and yearly feasts, to stones and pillars, have been the preservatives and memorials of his wonderful works. The works of God are his Holiness, Justice, Power, Mercy, Truth made visible. The administrations of God in one age, are for the instruction of all ages. God spake with *Jacob* only in person at *Bethel*, yet there the Scripture saith he spake with all his prosperity, *Hos. 12. 4.* He found him in *Bethel*, and there he spake with us. It is then a debt to posterity, to shew them what God hath done for us. Observe,

Secondly, *That it is our duty to enquire into the dealings of God in all ages.*

It was their duty before the word was written, and it is a duty still. The works of God are to be studied and read over as well as his word, *Deut. 4. 20. & 32.* Ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon earth; and ask from one side of heaven to another, enquire every way to see whether ever God dealt with a people, as he hath dealt with thee, whether God did ever assay to take to himself a Nation from the midst of another Nation by temptations, and by signs, and by wonders, &c. Enquire this of all the former times. So, *Deut. 32. 7.* Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations, ask thy father and he will shew thee, thy Elders, and they will tell thee. The Psalmist promises to rehearse what these were enjoined to record, *Psal. 78. 3, 4.* I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. Our speaking of, and enquiring into, what God hath done, shews the harmony between his word and works. And the former providences of God are food for our faith, as well as the promises of God.

Thirdly, That which I shall rather insist upon, is this, *True antiquity ever gives a testimony to the truth.*

Hence the Prophets send the people back to antiquity, *Jer. 6. 16.* Enquire for the good old-way. Every old way is not a good way, but in every good old way we may walk safely and see the footsteps of truth. It is a received rule, *That is truest which is ancientest.* It is certainly so, for truth is not only ancient, but eternal. Truth is as old as God himself, for Truth is nothing else but the mind of God, truth was with God from everlasting. Truth is commonly

monly called the daughter of time, yet (in a sense) it is the mother of time, for it was before time was; and therefore (no question) that which is ancientest is truest.

Yet there is a great abuse of this principle. Look back to antiquity, and consult with your fathers (say many) and see what they did, how they believed. But what is the antiquity they call us to consult with? It is not (as *Moses* spake in that place of *Deuteronomy*) antiquity, since God created man upon earth, or since Jesus Christ was upon the earth, and gave out his Gospel-laws; but it is the antiquity of some later ages and editions, an antiquity far short of what is indeed the ancient time. The Apostle (*1 Job. 2. 7.*) gives us the definition of an old commandment, *This is the old commandment which was from the beginning*. Our sinful nature is called the *old man*, and yet it is a *corrupt man*. It is called the *old man*, not that it is older then the *new man*; the *new man* is not of a younger house, or later date then the *old man*. Holiness was before corruption. And the Image of God upon man, elder then sin, the image of the devil. There are many corruptions in doctrine, in opinion, in worship, in practice, which go for very old: And there are many doctrines which we call *new truths*; is it because those corruptions are older then the new truths? No, new truths are elder then the oldest corruptions. That which we call the *new world*, was created in the beginning, though discovered but yesterday. So new truths were given from the beginning, only they were unknown till of late; and we may well conceive that some goodly Regions of truth are still (*terra incognita*) undiscovered; God having reserved them for the honour, and industry of some *divine Columbus*, who may give us an exacter sea-card of divine mysteries, then the world hath yet seen, though enough hath been seen from the beginning for the safe steering of our course to heaven. He that would enquire and make a diligent search for truth, must go to the first institutions, *That's the old commandment which was from the beginning*. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (*Chap. 23. 43.*) speaks of some who were *grown old in adulteries*; that is, old in adulterating and corrupting the truth, and worship of God, *That which is old may be old in evil, and fuller of errors then it is of days*. We find when the good Kings of *Judah* reformed, they did not search only into what was done in the ages immediately before them, or what their next fathers had done; but they searcht what was done in the times of their godly fathers, how many removes soever distant from them.

Hezekiah (2 Chr. 29. 6.) tells the *Levites* that their fathers were in an error, that they had trespassed, and done that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and had forsaken him; and *Chap. 30. 5.* speaking of the observation of the Passover, he saith, *They had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written*; therefore v. 7. he dehortheth them, saying, *Be not ye like your fathers which trespassed against the Lord God of your fathers*; he doth not mean that they should not be like their first fathers, who had the truth purely committed to them, and so worshipped God purely; but be not like your immediate fore-fathers, or your corrupt fore-fathers, how many descents and generations so ever ye can number from them. And this was a thing so strange, that when *Hezekiah* sent the Posts from City to City thorow the Countries of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* with this message, that he would have a reformation according to the first institution or pattern, and would not have them stay in what their fore-fathers had done; it is said, *vers. 10. That they laughed the messengers to scorn, and they mocked them*, what must we now be wiser then our fathers? Yes, saith he, you have done evil a long time, you and your fathers, therefore I must bring you back to your first fathers, in comparison of whom, the fathers you claim by were but children, and those degenerate children. It is said of *Josiah's* reformation (2 King. 23. 22.) *That there was not the like from the dayes of the Judges, nor in all the dayes of the Kings of Israel and Judah*; he went to the very beginning of all, there had not been such a thing done before. So that if any should have objected, why may not such a reformation serve us as served those Kings and Judges? No, saith *Josiah*, I will search what was beyond their time, into the remotest antiquities. The Church makes humble confession (*Psal. 106. 6.*) *We have erred with our fathers*; let not any turn this into a stubborn resolution, and say, *we will err with their fathers*: if that be an error which our fathers believed and practised, we will err with them. So those rebellious Jews pleaded (*Jer. 44. 17.*) *We will do as our fathers*. They who will do as their fathers, may suffer with their fathers; they who will needs err by their fathers copy, may go to hell too by their fathers copy. *Jerome* once desired leave of *Austin* to err with seven fathers whom he found of his opinion; I should not desire that leave, nor envy any one the priviledge: The Fathers are but children, when they erre; and they who will erre with their fathers, are worse then children.

Consider then to what antiquity and to what fathers you appeal. Many practices are very old, yet very erroneous. Many old sayings and old doings, must be unsaid and undone, or we shall be undone for ever. How many old sayings of the Jews doth Christ gain-say (*Mat. 5.*) *Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thus and thus, But I say unto you, &c.* And (*Mat. 19.*) answering the question about Divorce, *Moses indeed for the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.* Besides, some (like the Gibeonites) feign antiquity, they can put a gray beard upon a green head; and their opinions will be found fennowed and mouldy with error, not with age. As we must take heed of novelties; so we must be cautious about antiquities. Some antiquities of old men are no better than old wives fables, of which the Apostle bids us beware; unlearned old wives fables are as authentick as many learned mens antiquities pleaded for. To have an itch after novelties, and to dote upon antiquities, are alike vain and dangerous. Old fables and young fancies are with me at the same rate. *No man having drunk old wine* (saith Christ, *Luk. 5.35.*) *strait way calls for new; for he saith the old is better.* Old is better then new, if it be as good as new. But any new truth is better then the oldest error; and every error, the elder it is, the worser it is.

Again, *Bildad* advises *Job* to prepare himself to the search of his fathers. Hence observe,

We must not presume to find truth with ease, or to come sleightly by it.

Prepare thy self (*Prov. 2.3.*) *If thou cryest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding: if thou dig for it as silver, and search for it as for hid treasures, then thou shalt find, &c.* A man that will find silver, must prepare and fit himself to search for silver. That lies not upon the surface, but in the bosome and bowels of the earth. There are four things wherein this preparation consists.

1. Humility: God doth not teach but resist the proud, he gives more grace (Humility is much Grace) to the humble. A lowly minded man shall know the mind of the most high God.

2. Holiness submitting to, and practising the truth we know, prepares us for the receiving of more truth. He that doth the will of Christ shall know his doctrine, *Job. 7. 17.*

3. Prayer: *Doth any man want wisdom, let him ask of God, Jam.*

1. 5. Truth is the daughter of God, and he will not bestow her
in

in marriage upon our minds, unless we ask him.

4. Love unto truth. *Truth is a beauty, and deserves our love; to love truth is not a civility, but a duty: to search for truth without love to truth, is a dishonour to truth; and as the not receiving the love of the truth, is the cause why many apostatize and fall from it, so it is a reason why many are still ignorant and cannot come at it. As God, the Father of truth, must be askt his good will before we can have her: So truth the daughter of God shall be loved before we have her.*

Bildad having thus advised *Job* to search antiquity, giveth him a reason of his advice, a modest reason, reflecting upon himself and upon his friends.

Vers. 9. *For we are but of yesterday and know nothing, our dayes on earth are a shadow.*

As if he had said, the reason why we refer thee to the former ages, is, because we are able to say so little of our selves and from our own experience, *we are but of yesterday*, that is, the time we have lived is very little, our days have been few upon earth. Truth is the daughter of time, and we are scarce sons of time, *we are but of yesterday*.

חמל
Heri dicitur de
die præterito,
tam de propin-
quo, quam de
longinquo, quasi
diceret antea.
Rab Dav.
Apostolus He-
braizans, sic u-
ritur vocabulo,
χθις. Heb. 13.
8.

Heri & nudi-
us, dum si-
mul janguntur,
proverbialem
confici vel hy-
perbolem, tem-
pus nuper adu
significantem.
Sic etiam apud

Yesterday] Taken in our common speech, signifies only the day immediately going before. 2. It is put for the time a little before, and is as much as *lately*, 2 King. 9. 26. *Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his Sons*: That is, it is not long since *Naboth* and his sons were slain, and their blood is as fresh in my memory, as if it were in my eye. 3. It is put for all time, how long so ever past (*Heb. 13. 8.*) the Apostle *Hebraizing*, saith, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to day, and for ever*; yesterday is not put for the day immediately before, or for many days before, but for all days before, even from the beginning of the world; yea, not only are all days past included in yesterday, but the eternity, which is past.

Yesterday and the day before, are often translated *before* or *heretofore*, *Gen. 3. 1. 2. 5. Exod. 40. 10. Ruth 2. 11. 2 Sam. 5. 2.* noting time not much past, the present.

In this place by *yesterday*, we are not to understand all time past, nor the time immediately past, but small time past, *we are but of yesterday*, that is, we have lived but a while in the world (yet they were old men) the days which we have seen are as nothing, he ex-
presses

presses their lives by the least compleat time past, to shew that they had lived but a little time past.

Græcos χθες
ἡμερον. Bold.

So, in Scripture, this phrase, *to morrow* (opposite to yesterday) signifies not only the day immediately to come, but any time to come indefinitely (1 Sam. 28. 29.) the devil answers Saul, *To morrow thou and thy Sons shall be with me*; he did not know exactly and precisely that it should be the very next day, but he useth a word which would save his credit, if it should have fallen out many dayes or some years after. *To morrow* may be any time to come.

χθες usurpatur
indefinitè de
tempore præte-
rito ut cras de
futuro. Druf.

As then *to morrow* signifies the immediate day coming, or all time to come, so *yesterday* signifies the immediate day past, or all time past. Thus one of the Ancients speaks of Matthew, *Yesterday a Publican, to day a Preacher*: that is, he was heretofore a Publican, and now a Preacher.

ὁ χθες τελευτῶν
ἡ σήμερον ἐ-
παγγέλλεται.
Sensus est antea
nunc. Nazianz.
de Mat.

For we are but as Yesterday.

Bildad stileth himself and his friends *yesterday*, to shew they had been but short-lived, though they had lived long. Some have given us the date of their years, or an account how old they were. They reckon *Bildad* an hundred and forty, *Eliphaz* an hundred and fifty, and *Zophar* an hundred and twenty years old. In what records the years of their nativities were found, I know not: but probable enough it is, that they were ancient men; And (Chap. 15. 10.) *Eliphaz* speaks as much, *with us are both the gray-headed and very ancient men, much elder then thy father*. Yet *Bildad* calleth himself and them, but as of yesterday, either absolutely, because the life of man is short, or comparatively to the lives of the fathers in the first age of the world, who lived much longer. His meaning then is, we will not bound thee to our experiences, who have lived but a while, but enform thy self from them who lived many years ago, and lived many years, some of them nine hundred years and more; enquire of *Methuselah*, and his contemporaries, who are able to give thee a better account then we. Therefore he addeth,

Hiberni, quasi
unius diei ho-
mines sunt, no-
vi & recentes.

And know nothing.

The particle [*And*] is here causal, *We are but of yesterday, therefore we know nothing*; in which sense we read it often. Take an instance (Ezek. 23. 31.) *Thou hast walked in the way of thy sister, therefore I will give her cup into thine hand*: The Hebrew is, *And I will give her cup into thy hand, thou shalt pledge her in the same cup*

off

of affliction. So here, *We are but of yesterday and know nothing*; that is, *We are but of yesterday, therefore we know nothing.*

Know nothing.

The negation is not absolute, but comparative. *We know nothing*, that is, we neotericks know but little in comparison of those who lived long ago, and lived so long, even many centuries, gathering knowledge, and making up their observations: for (*Chap. 12. 12.*) *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes understanding.* Hence observe,

The short life of man is not sufficient to gain much knowledge.

*Ats longa, vita
brevi. Hipp.*

We are but of yesterday, and we know nothing, we cannot know much who live but little. The great Physitian complained long ago, *Life is short, and art is long*, natural life is not long enough for the journey of natural knowledge. How much less is it for divine knowledge, in the mystery of Christ: which is the art of all arts, and science of sciences. Those mysteries are very long, and our lives are very short, therefore at our best, we come short in the knowledge of them. Hence the Apostle (*1 Cor. 13.*) speaking of the most perfect knowledge we have in this life, concludes, *we know but in part*; there is a vast ocean of truths in the Gospel, but we are straight-necked vessels, we take in truth but by drops; we are long a taking it in, and we have not long to take it in; hence the emptiness of those who are fullest. He that hath much to learn, and but a little to live, cannot learn much. And as our time is little, so we lose a great deal of our time. Our losses of the time we have, hinder more then our having but little time. Our dayes are few, but if we could number them, we should apply our selves to, and gain to our selves a sufficient stock of holy wisdom. *The greatest reason why we profit no more in knowledge, is, because we improve our time no more*, though that be a reason also, because we have no more time.

*Non parum
temporis habemus,
sed multum
perdimus. Sen.*

Secondly, observe, how modestly Bildad speaks of himself, and of his friends, *We are but of yesterday, and we know nothing.*

It becometh us to have humble thoughts of our own knowledge, how much soever we know.

These were neither children nor fools, who had to do with Job, they were the wisest of that age, *Oracles of wisdom*, yet *we know nothing*, saith Bildad. The best of our knowledge here, is to know our imperfections; it is as much knowledge as we can reach, to know

know wherein our knowledge cometh short. The Apostle (1 Cor. 8. 2.) is direct, *He that thinketh he knoweth any thing knoweth nothing as he ought to know*: He would not have us think that we know any thing: Though he had said in the former verse, *We know that we have all knowledge*, the Apostle knew it, but he would not have them think it. His meaning is, I grant there is knowledge abroad in the world, I have some, and you have some. We know that we have all knowledge: which yet some understand, as if he spake in a secret irony, against those who brag'd so much of their knowledg, Yea, *We know you have all knowledge, but let me tell you thus much, you who stand so much upon your knowledge, he that thinketh he knoweth any thing, knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*. How can that be? Is not a man to think that he knowes what he knows? Must a man think himself ignorant, or otherwise he must be accounted ignorant? Surely no. There are very many that know much, and they may think that they may know something, yea, that they know many things. But observe the word there, *He that thinketh*: the word doth not signifie a simple apprehension of a thing, or a bare and naked knowledge, for so a man may reflect upon his own knowledge, and *know that he knows as well as what he knows*: but imports *thinking*, with a kind of insolency and pride of spirit, with affectation, boasting and vain glory in that knowledge. *He that thinketh he knowes any thing*, that is, he that vaunts and stands upon his knowledge, who conceits he hath so much knowledge, such a head-piece that he can carry all before him by the strength of his wit and parts, such a knowing man *knowes nothing*. *That mans wisdom is but a conceit who is wise in his own conceit*. In this sense we have the word (Mat. 3. 9.) where the Baptist bespeaks the Pharisees, *Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; think not*, it was not a sin for them to think that Abraham was their father, and that they were descended from him, but *think not*, that is, do not think of this, and so be proud of it. Be not lifted up upon an outward priviledge, which will stand you in no stead at all, if you stand upon it: *Except you be changed and born again of the Spirit, it will not avail you that you are born of Abrahams flesh: If Abrahams faith be not in your hearts, it shall be no advantage to you that Abrahams blood runs in your veins*. The word is so used again (Phil. 3. 4.) *If any one thinketh he may be confident, I much more*: If any one may have an opinion of himself in regard of outward priviledges, surely I

*ὁ δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἐν-
μινatio negan-
tis particula
vehementius
nega, Bez.*

*Docet non signi-
ficat simplicem
aliquam persua-
sionem, sed quæ
cum subergia
et insolentia
conjuncta est,
alioquin nihil
magis repugna-
fidei, quam Aca-
demica dubita-
tio Bez.*

K
may,

& δ'ε'π'ω & δ'ε'ρ'γε-
 minatio negan-
 tis particulæ
 vehementius
 nega, Bez.

doxæ non signi-
ficat simplicem
aliquam persua-
sionem, sed que
cum subergia
et insolentia
conjuncta est,
alioquin nihil
magis repugna-
fidei, quam ac-
demica dubita-
tio Bez.

may, but I will not. So then an opinion or a conceitedness of our knowledge blasts all our knowledge, such a man *knoweth nothing as he ought to know*; he knoweth somewhat by rote, but he doth not know any thing (as a Christian ought) *by heart*. By how much we have the more true knowledge of the highest objects, by so much we have the lower thoughts of our knowledge. *It is best to know as much as we can of the best things, and to think as little as we can of our selves.*

Our dayes upon earth are a shadow.

But were not the dayes of all the fathers a shadow? Yes, the longest life is but a long shadow; he means comparatively, our lives are shorter by much then theirs were, and therefore but a shadow.

There are three sorts of shadows. 1. Natural. 2. Civil. 3. Spiritual.

First, A natural shadow is a dark light caused by the coming of some thick body between us and the Sun. This is a shadow in a proper and strict acception.

Secondly, Besides the natural, there is a civil shadow, *Protection is a shadow*; And to be under a shadow, is to be protected. We translate (*Num. 14. 9.*) *Their defence is departed from them*, the Hebrew is, *Their shadow*. So *Isa. 4. 5.* and *25. 4.*

Thirdly, A shadow is taken for a dark or imperfect representation of things spiritual; so all the Ceremonies of the old Law are called shadows (*Heb. 8. 5. & 10. 1. & 9. 9. Col. 2. 17.*) Ceremonial worship is expressed by a shadow; because it was an obscure representation of the truth: The Ceremonies were interposed between Christ the true light and us, and so cast a shadow of him. Or, as a Painter, who is to draw the lively figure or shape of a man, at first makes an obscure draught, or some imperfect lines of the body, but afterwards gives it beauty and lustre to the life. The Moisaical rites were such a shadow of heavenly things. Yet further, a shadow (which comes nearest the meaning of this text) notes the least imaginable sign or semblance of a thing: So (*Jam. 1. 17.*) when the Apostle saith, That with God the Father of lights, *there is not so much as a shadow of turning*, he means, there is not the least sign or token of turn v ith God.

When Bildad saith, *Our dayes upon earth are but as a shadow*, we may understand it, either of the time past, and so our life is but

a shadow that is gone. Or, it may be meant of the whole life of man taken together. The life of man (take it from the beginning to the ending, from the *Alpha* to the *Omega*, from the first to the last of it) is a shadow. The comparison is frequent in Scripture, I shall not need to stay upon it. See two or three particulars of the resemblance.

1. The life of man is a shadow, because it hath little in it that is substantial, a shadow is opposed to a substance; our life rather seems to be, then is, it is so quickly gone.

*Umbra est quid
mane, & nihil
habet solidæ
substantiæ*

2. A shadow (though sometimes it be put for protection and safety, yet) implies unsettledness and uncertainty; if a man stands or rests under a shadow, the shadow will leave him, 'twill be gone from him, and betray him to the scorching Sun-beams; a shadow never keeps long in one place, but varies with the motion of the Sun, and when it is high noon the shadow goes quite up, and is not. There is such an uncertainty in the life of man, it holds not one tenour, it staves not in any state, there is a deceitfulness in it, changes are upon it. The greatest certainty of our lives, is, that they are uncertain.

*Umbra denotat
malefdom sta-
tionem & pro-
tectionem figu-
ram, nam qui
sub umbra dor-
mit proditur
statim, atque tra-
ditur radiis so-
lis. Pined.*

In general, the life of man being compared to a shadow, teacheth us, that it is short, moveable and unconstant, there is no hold or tack in it, Psal. 102. 11. *My dayes are like a shadow that declineth.* The encrease of our dayes hath a declension in it, 1 Chron. 29. 15. *We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our dayes on the earth are as the shadow.* How doth he explain that? *There is none abiding in our dayes, as there is no abiding in a shadow.* Many of the Ancients have represented the life of man, not only as a shadow, but less then a shadow, *A dream of a shadow, a shadow of a shadow, an Idol of a shadow*, which is the lowest expression that can be, as much as to say, a nothing of nothing. *An Idol is nothing in the world.* God made no such thing in the world. And though our dayes be made by God in the world, yet they are no such thing as God made, or as the world makes them. We have met with points about the shortness and transitoriness of mans life often in this book, I shall therefore only add a word here.

*Homo, vocatur
οἷα ὄναρ. Pin-
ναρὲς οἷα.
Soph.
εἰδωλον οἷα.*

It is our wisdom, forasmuch as our life on earth is as a shadow, that we improve this shadow to gain assurance of eternal light: *Life here is but a fleeting shadow, that to come is an abiding substance.* Shall we for the pleasures and comforts of a life, which is no more enduring then a shadow, hazard the pleasures and com-

*Attendat igitur
homo in diebus
umbræ suæ, ut
faciat aliquid
dignum deside-
rata lucis suæ.
Aug. in Ps. 143.*

forts of a life, which endures for ever. A man hath not a shadow of reason, not a shadow of true wisdom and understanding, who will spend out a shadowish life in those things which are but a shadow, neglecting that which is the true light, and will bring us to eternal light?

Bildad having put in this parenthesis as a reason why he sends *Job* to the fathers, gives him an encouragement at the tenth verse, to make this query, he tells him what he shall get for his pains in consulting with those former ages, and with the fathers.

Vers. 10. *Shall not they teach thee and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?*

As if he had said, *Thou shalt not lose thy labour by inquiring into those ancient times, shall not they teach thee?* Certainly they shall, thou shalt not come away empty, undirected, uncounsel'd.

Shall not they teach thee?

How, could they teach? They were dead and gone, they were past many ages before. *Bildad* may be conceived to answer, *Though the fathers are dead, yet they will speak to thee, and counsel thee, as well as if they lived and stood before thee with our selves: They shall teach thee, and they shall instruct thee.* And more then that, they will not only teach thee in a complement, and speak words to thee, but they will speak their very hearts to thee: thou shalt find that they will give thee cordial counsel, they will utter words to thee out of their heart.

Utter words out of their heart.

The meaning of that is, either: First in general, they will give thee the real conceptions of their minds about these points, they will speak sincerely, they will not speak to thee from the teeth outward, but from the heart inward. Secondly, they will speak wisely and judiciously to thee about these things; they will utter, not so much words as Oracles to thee out of their heart.

The heart is the seat of knowledge and understanding, and a wise man is (*homo cordatus*) a hearty man, a man with a heart; and a fool in Scripture is said to be a heartless man, a man without a heart, he cannot utter words from his heart, who wants a heart; he utters them from his mouth, or from his tongue. *A fools heart is in his mouth, and a wise mans mouth is in his heart;* he speaks that which lies

Elloquitur ex corde proferre, est sapienter loqui, sapiens cordatus dicitur; stultus ex ore.

lies in the inmoſt reſſes and cloſets of his ſpirit : he ſpeaks from meditation, he brings what he ſpeaks to his heart, and from his heart utters what he ſpeaks. Chriſt assures us, *That a good man out of the good treaſure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treaſure of his heart, brings forth evil things.* Every heart is a treaſury. When a good man ſpeaks evil, he ſpeaks not from his heart (though he hath a ſtock of ſinfulneſs in him) but from his lips ; and when an evil man ſpeaks good, he ſpeaks it not from his heart, but from his lips : for he hath no ſtock or treaſury of good within. An hypocrite ſpeaks good with a heart, and a heart with a double heart. A fool ſpeaks without a heart, yet of the two, it is better to have no heart then two.

*Cor loquitur,
quæ animus
præmeditatus
eſt; os loquitur
ſine meditati-
one.*

Or we may take the meaning of the words, as a ſecret reproof of *Job* ; If thou wilt look after theſe fathers, and ſearch them, they will not ſpeak as thou haſt done, raſhly, unadviſedly and indiſcreetly, but they will ſpeak from their hearts, they will utter things of weight and ſerious conſideration. From hence obſerve,

Fiſt, *That old men are preſumed to have a great ſtock of knowledge.*

Go to the fathers, they will certainly teach thee. Every man ſhould labour to have a proportion of knowledge to his proportion of years; we ſhould not be children in underſtanding, when we are men in time. The Apoſtle reproves ſuch as are ſo (*Heb. 5. 2.*) *When (ſaith he) for the time you ought to be teachers (look upon the yeares that are gone over your heads, and you ought to be teachers ; you ſhould have much in your hearts for the inſtruction of others, yet ſo it is) you have need that one teach you again, which be the fiſt principles of the Oracles of God, and you are become ſuch as have need of milk, and not of ſtrong meat.*

Secondly obſerve, *They who are dead and gone, yet ſpeak to us as if they were living.*

Bildad ſends *Job* to the ancient fathers, go, they will teach thee and utter words out of their hearts. Whileſt we conſider what they have ſpoken and done, it is as if they now ſpake, *Heb. 11. 4. Abel by faith offered a better ſacrifice then Cain, and being dead he yet ſpeaketh.* They who are dead ſpeak by their works, and they ſpeak by the words which they ſpake, while they were alive. The records which they have left give us counſel to this day. When the rich man (it is the ſcope of the Parable) I ſay, when the rich man (*Luk. 16. 7.*) deſired that *Lazarus* might go from the dead to ſpeak to his brethren,

then, *Abraham* answers him, *They have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them, &c.* If they hear not *Moses and the Prophets* neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. They have *Moses and the Prophets*; but *Moses and the Prophets* were dead and gone; how have they *Moses and the Prophets*? they have not the men before them, but they had their writings and records: they who read the *Prophets* writings hear their speakings. *Books are silent voices.*

If *Moses* and the *Prophets* may be heard when dead and gone, then much more may we hear *Christ*, since he died and rose, and his *Apostles* who are dead. And whereas some have an opinion that they do not know the mind of *Christ*, or that they cannot reform the Church or their Churches till *Christ* himself come from heaven to do it, or till there be *Apostles* sent personally to do it (they wanting an *Apostle*, cannot order the worship and ordinances of God, and therefore conclude against a present Church-state) I say to such, if that be your ground that you must have *Christ* and his *Apostles* to settle all for you, you have your desires. Look into the works and word of *Christ*, into the writings and practises of his *Apostles*, both for your rule and pattern. If *Abraham* could say, they have *Moses* and the *Prophets*, they may hear them: surely, we may say much more, we have *Christ* and his *Apostles* whom we may hear and consult about all the institutions and orders that concern the frame of his Church. We need not stay till *Christ* come down in person from heaven, or till new *Apostles* are sent, and furnished with instruction for this work, for we have *Christ* and his *Apostles* already, we hear what *Christ* spake, we read the rules which he gave concerning the wayes of his worship and government of his Church (in all the essential and constitutive parts of either) to the end of the world.

Thirdly, observe, *They that teach others should teach their own hearts to speak.*

It is best speaking to others with the heart. The heart will teach better then the tongue, yea better then the understanding, *The word which comes from the heart of the teacher, goes soonest to the heart of the hearer.*

Fourthly observe, *The heart is the true repository or treasury of holy truths.*

You may see where the fathers, the holy men in ancient time, laid up truth: they utter words out of their heart, then, truth was layed up

up there. Truth is (as it were) the heart of God, and therefore we must put it into our hearts. *David* hid the Commandements of God in his heart: *Mary* laid up the words of Christ there. To have the word only swimming in our *brains*, is to as little purpose, as to have it only in our *Note-books*. To have truth only in our brains or in our books, will do us as little good as water in our shoes. It is a sad thing to consider how many thousand Sermons are written almost word for word in books, and scarce a letter of them written in the heart. The promise of the new Covenant is, that God *will write his law in our hearts*: Let not any rest satisfied in having the word written in their books.

Observe further, *Holy men of old did highly esteem the word and truths of God.*

You may know the esteem they had of these by the place where they laid these; the heart is the best place, the fairest room in man. To put a thing into the heart, notes highest esteem and approbation. When we say a thing is in our hearts, we cannot say more to express our esteem of it. When the Apostle (*Phil. 1. 7.*) professes to the *Philippians*, *I have you in my heart*, his meaning is, you are most dear and precious to me. When we see a man preparing a special place, a safe place, a convenient place to lay a thing in, we conclude that the thing he would lay up is of value and account with him: when we are preparing and fitting our hearts to put the word and truths of God in, hereby we give a real testimony, that we honour the word of God. For the most part the truths of God (as we say of things we neglect) are cast at mens heels rather than laid up in their hearts. We may know the esteem a *Queen of England* had of the *City of Calice*, when she said, *It was in her heart, and there they should find it, if they opened her.*

So much concerning these three verses, containing an argument from antiquity, and the testimony of the first ages, by which *Bil-dad* confirms his former position, *That God is just.*

And not cut down.

That is, before it is cropt and pull'd up by the hand, or is fully ripe.

It withereth before any other herb.

That is, sooner or more speedily then any other herb of lesser shew, but better rooting. There are two causes why trees wither, both which are here removed from the rush, and yet it withers.

First, *Age*, but the rush withers while it is young in its greenness.

Secondly, *Violence*, when it is pull'd up or cut down by force of hand : but the rush withers, while it is not cut down. Both argue enough, the little subsistency which the rush hath in it self; to seek any further account about it, were but to seek a knot in a rush.

Vers. 13. *So are the paths of all that forget God, &c.*

Bildad having explained his similitude, now applies it. The comparison may be made out three ways.

First, That hypocrites are kept in life and lustre, by outward, earthly supplies only, as the rush is by mire and water; and therefore when these fail, they fail also.

Secondly, as the rush dies, because it hath no water; so an hypocrite declines and wastes, because he is not watered by the blessings of God, and hath no rooting in grace. The *Seed cast on the stony ground* (Matth. 13.6.) *withered, because it had no earth*. The lack of earth to the one is the same with the lack of water to the other.

Thirdly, In the general, that as a rush flourishes a while, but quickly withers; so the best estate of an hypocrite, his greenness is of no long continuance; his seeming graces, like his joyes, are but for a moment. Hence observe,

Natural things are shadows to us of spiritual.

We may learn many lessons from speechless creatures. While we turn the leaves and peruse the contents of this great volume the book of nature, we may find much of the God of nature. *David* took instructions from it daily (Psal. 8.) *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him? I say like-*
wise

tells us of a land, sending Ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters.

Can the rush grow?

In strength, lustre and beauty. The word implies growing with a kind of pride, so plants do in a rich or proper soyl, they lift up their heads, and carry it highly.

Can the rush grow without mire?

Which is as much as to say, can a man live without food? Mire is the rushes meat and drink. It loves and delights in a moorish soyl, and by the rivers side. A rush, upon the dry land, is like a fish upon the dry land. At most the rush among vegetables and plants, is like those fowls and beasts among sensitives, which live part upon the water, and part upon the land.

Can the flag grow without water?

The word signifies any fertile place for grass, a meadow, Gen. 41. 2. Pharaoh saw in his dream seven well-favoured kine, and fat-fleshed, and they fed in a meadow. Some render it so here, *Can the meadow grow without water?* Both flags and meadows are such drinkers, that they quickly wither, if they want water: which Bildad gives us plainly in the next verse.

Vers. 12. *Whilest it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.*

Whilest it is yet in his greenness.] Or, shooting up in his stemme. Some derive the Hebrew word from *Ab*, Father; and so it may be rendered from the letter of the Hebrew, though the expression be somewhat uncouth. While it is yet in it's paternity, or fatherhood, that is, while it is flourishing and procreative. Others derive it from *Abib*, which signifies an ear of corn, or the ear with the stalk. Hence the moneth *Abib* among the Jews had its name, because in those climates, corn was then eared and began to be ripe; it was the first moneth to the Israelites, because of their coming out of Egypt, and answered to part of our March, and part of April, Exod. 13. 4. Chap. 23. 15. *This day came ye out in the moneth Abib, this moneth shall be to you the beginning of moneths.* So then, this greenness of the rush implies the strength and best of it, the goodliness and beauty of it.

רחל

Elatu, emina-
it, est mediæ
significationis,
sumitur pro vi-
tiosa elatione,
quæ est superbia
etiam pro mag-
nificentiâ &
decore. Rivet.
in Hof. 5. 5.
Limosus juncus,
palustres jubet,
Amphibia.

רחל

Locus graminis
ubi pascuntur
pecora forsan
ab 178 frater
quod ex una
stirpe veluti
multi fratres
gignantur, quæ
si herbarum
quædam frater-
nitas.

אב

Abib est spica
maturescens,
vel spica cum
calamo, inde
libbo virguli
aut lignum vi-
vens in eo, sc. a
tempore quo est
prens novarum
frugum & fron-
dium. Vel ab
178 pater, q d.
in paternitate,
sua.

J O B, Chap. 8. Verf. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Can the rush grow without mire? can the flag grow up without water?

Whilest it is yet in his greenness and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite hope shall perish.

Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web.

He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

THis context from the 11th to the 20th verse, contains an illustration (for so are similitudes) of the former argument; and it is taken from a three-fold similitude. First, of a *rush*, which is explained, verf. 11, 12. and applied in the 13th verse. The second is, of a *spiders web*, explained and applied 14, 15. The third of a *luxuriant flourishing tree*, explained verse, 16, 17, 18. applied, verse nineteen. Behold, *this is the joy of his way*, &c.

The sum of all may be given in this brief;

That it is as equal and ordinary in the course of divine justice to destroy wicked men; as it is in the course of nature, for a rush to wither when it wants water; or, for a spiders web to break when it is leaned upon; or for a tree to be hewen down, when it either undergrows or overgrows its owners house; when casting it's roots under the foundation, it loosens the stones, and weakens the ground-work; or, when it spreads its boughs and grows so high that it drops upon the roof, or darkens the windows of it.

Verf. 11. *Can the rush grow without mire?*

It cannot. The Original word for a *rush* speaks its nature; the root signifying to suck or drink in, or alwayes to be guzling down. The rush lives in liquor, and is alwayes drinking. These abounded neer the banks of Nilus in Egypt. There Moses was put into an Ark or skiff made of bulrushes, Exod. 2.3. The Prophet (Isa. 18.1,2.) tells

AND
Juncus AND
bitib, ingurgi-
ravit, quia jun-
cus est aquae
immersus, &
eam semper
imb. bens,
Conferitur bibu-
la Memphrya-
cymba papyra.
Luc. 14.
Perq; papyri-
feri septem flua-
flumina Nili.

wife, when we behold the grafs and flowers of the field, the flag, the rush in the water, we may not only put the question, *What is man?* but we may resolve the question, what the man is : when we look upon the meanest creatures, we may see pieces of our selves, they are as we are in many considerations, and we as they ; what is man ? Man is as grafs. What is a wicked man, an hypocrite ? *He is a rush, He is like the chaff which the wind drives away.* What is a godly man ? *He is like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.* The Spirit of God from things sensible and visible, raiseth us up to things spiritual and invisible.

The Ancients were very frequent in this kind of study, perusing the book of nature, and taking helps to better the understanding by every object of the eye. It is well observed by one of them, *That God sent us the book of Nature, before he sent the Book of Scripture.* The mind of God was written upon the things which he had made, before he made Tables or Books to write his mind in. The Fathers had many revelations from the beginning, but they had not Scripture from the beginning. Some conceive that *Isaac* going out into the fields to meditate, meditated upon the text of the creature, and used to raise his heart by those steps of earth to heavenly contemplations. It is said of *Solomon*, (1 King. 4. 32, 33.) *That he spake three thousand Proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five, and that he spake of trees, from the Cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; which * Josephus* expounds thus, *Solomon* applyed his three thousand parables or similitudes unto those trees or plants about which he discoursed, drawing some divine moral from every plant, whose nature as a Phylosopher he had described.

More distinctly, for the spiritualizing of this similitude, consider wherein a wicked man or an hypocrite, is like unto a rush; the rush may be of good value to us, being thus improved.

First, the rush is a very spongy, hoven, hollow substance, it is not solid or close-grain'd : An hypocrite hath no solidity, we call him a hollow-hearted man.

Secondly, Hypocrites are well compared to a rush or a flag, because in windy weather they sit which way soever the wind sits. They take no harm by a storm, because they yield to every turn : let the wind blow which way it will, the rush breaks neither body nor branch. Let things turn which way they will, hypocrites

Præmisit Deus naturam magicam, submissurum & prophetiam, quo facilius credas prophetiae discipulis naturam.

Tertul. Familiare est Syris & maxime Palestinis ad omnem sermonem suum parabolis jungere, ut quod per simplex præceptum teneri non potest, per similitudines teneatur. Hier. in c. 19. Mat.

** Cui libet speciei plantarum suam adhibuit parabolam ! Joseph. in loc.*

can shift, and bend, and yield with them. And therefore when storms arise, which pull down and destroy many goodly trees of Gods own planting, these rushes continue. Hypocrites keep their standing, because they never stand. A great man being asked how he kept his honour and preferment in so many changes of wind and weather, of times and Princes, answered, *By being a willow, and not an Oak.* He that can sway, seldome breaks. Hypocrites in the Church and State, live by the same principles.

Thirdly, A bulrush or a flag in time of a storm hangs down the head, but when the storm is over, it holds up the head, and stands upright again. This resemblance between the hypocrite and a bulrush is given by the Prophet (*Isa. 58. 5.*) *Is this the fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush? &c.* The bulrush in a storm seems to be humbled to the very ground, but in fair weather it is as high ever. Hypocrites in times of publick humiliation, hang down their heads, and seem to lay their mouths in the dust, but when the day is past, they quickly forget their sorrows. *If I* (saith the Apostle, *Gal. 1. 18.*) *build again the things which I have destroyed, I make myself a transgressor.* Hypocrites are the worst sort of transgressors, for they seem to destroy their sins one day, but they indeed build them again the next.

Fourthly, The rush and the flag grow only in miry places, where they may have abundance of water and moisture, which notes a kind of sensuality in them, and therefore they have their names from *drinking.* So hypocrites seem to be heavenly, but are indeed earthly: they are like the rush, they cannot live without store of water, they are sensual, they must please their appetites, and delight their palates. The Apostle describes them so, *They serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies;* they must be supported with the affluence of outward things, else they cannot hold out in profession. Whereas the godly and true believers can live, when the water is drain'd or dry'd away, when outward things fail and are gone. So the Prophet *Habakkuk* professes, Chap. 3. ult. *Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, though the fields shall yield no meat, and there be no herds in the stall, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, and will joy in the God of my salvation.* A godly man will grow when all the world decays to him; he will rejoyce in God when all outward comforts fail him; hypocrites must have sensual supplies, or they are lost. *A feigned love*
of

of spiritual things is ever joyned with a true love of worldly things. Christ speaks of some who followed him more for the loaves then for the word. And Judas followed his Masters bag, more then his Master.

Fifthly, Bulrushes or flags yield no fruit at all, they only make a fair shew; hypocrites how green so ever they are, what shew or profession soever they make, yield no fruit of holiness.

Sixtly, A bulrush or a flag withers sooner then any other herb, that is, then other herbs that are not seated so near the water. And this agrees well with the hypocrite, for when the hypocrite begins once to wither, he withers quickly. He never had any true life, and he will not long appear to have any. When one that hath made a fair profession begins to decay, he decays sooner then a meer civil man; a civil man will hold out in Honesty and Justice a great while, but a hypocrite gives over holiness and godliness presently. Besides, God blasts and withers an hypocrite sooner than any other man, because he hath abused and wronged God more then any other man. When judgements come they fall first upon hypocrites, *The hypocrites in Zion tremble*, Isa. 33. Trembling will take hold upon the prophane and openly wicked, but trembling takes hold soonest upon hypocrites; they have most cause to tremble, who were confident without a cause. False hope is the parent of real fear; and they who believe without repenting, shall repent without believing.

Verse 13. *So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope shall perish.*

So are the paths.] So, that is, thus it comes to pass, this is the way and the end of all those who forget God.

The path of a man is taken two wayes.

First, For his state and condition, *Psal. 1. The way of the wicked shall perish*; that is, the whole state of a wicked man shall perish.

Secondly, For his course and conversation, *Job 33. 11. He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths*, that is, he takes notice of the whole course of my life; all my conversation, all my tradings and dealings are before God. This path of mans course and conversation is two-fold. There is an internal, and there is an external path. The internal is that of the mind; the mind hath it's course, the heart hath a way, *Isa. 57. 17. He went on forwardly in the way of his heart*. The external path is that of outward actions:

*Sic sone illi ec-
cidit Cusu ve-
nit, talis est eo-
rum conditio.
Drus.*

ctions: That which we usually do, is our path. Thus the actions and works of God are called the paths of God, *Job 40. 19. Bebe-moth is the chief of the wayes of God. Prov. 8. 22. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. Psal. 77. 13. Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary; that is, thy actions and doings are seen there.*

Our actions are compared to a path in two respects. 1. Because we are frequent in them; that which is a mans course he treads every day. 2. They are called our paths, because they lead us to some end; every path leads us to some place or other. Some actions lead to life, and some to death, some lead to heaven, some to hell, some to Christ, and some to Satan, to one of these ends, we are travelling and journeying all the dayes of our lives.

Of those that forget God.

To forget God imports these four things.

1. Not to think of God, we forget that which we mind not. The first act of remembring is thinking. The thief on the cross prayed, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdome;* that is, think of me for good. God is not in all the thoughts of a wicked man to obey or honour him, and a wicked man is not in all the thoughts of God, (in this sense) to bless or pardon him.

2. To forget God, is to disobey God, or not to do the will of God, *Deut. 8. 11. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God in not keeping his Commandments.* As to remember God, is to do the will of God, *Eccles. 12. 1. Remember thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth:* that is, do the will of thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth: so to forget God, is to disobey God, not to do his will. God is said to forget us when he doth not our will, that is, when we in prayer propose our desires to God to do them for us; the not doing of those things for us, is to forget us. *David* expostulates, *Psal. 77. 9. Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* He had prayed much at the beginning of the Psalm with success, *I cryed unto God with my mouth, even unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me.* He puts up other requests, which finding no present answer, or sensible acceptance, he cries out, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* Now, as when the Lord doth not our will, he is said in Scripture to forget us, so when we do not the will of God, we indeed forget him.

3. To forget is lightly to eſteem, to ſleight the Lord. That which a man highly eſteems, he keeps in his memory, and treaſures it up there; and when a man forgets a thing, eſpecially when he wilfully forgets it, he diſreſpects it, he ſleights and contemns it, *Oblivio affert contemptum.* Jer. 30. 14. *All thy lovers have forgotten thee*; that is, thy lovers care not for thee, they ſleight and eſteem lightly of thee. When a man comes not at one whom he loves, he is ſaid to forget him, Jer. 2. 32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire?* A maid hath a great eſteem of her ornaments, eſpecially of her wedding ornaments, and therefore ſhe is often thinking of them; it may be ſhe can hardly ſleep the night before, for thinking of the rich garments, yea the bracelets and bables ſhe is to wear upon the wedding day. *Can a bride forget her attire?* Will ſhe throw theſe by the walls (as we ſpeak) or caſt them at her heels? Yet, ſaith the Lord, *My people have forgotten me dayes without number.* They have lightly eſteemed me, I am not ſo much to them as new clothes, who am indeed their life; I am not ſo much remembred as unnecessary curioſities, from whom they receive all things neceſſary, and whoſe favour is the one thing neceſſary.

4. To forget God is to depart from God. We ſtay with God no longer then we remember him: as we cannot have communion with truth, ſo not with the God of truth, without an act of memory (*Heb. 12. 5.*) *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which ſpeaketh unto you as unto children, My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, &c.* A word forgotten is to us of no more uſe then a word never ſpoken. We are without all the good we forget; and to forget God is (*Eph. 2. 12.*) *to be without God in the world*; or, to live on earth as if there were no God in heaven, either in regard of mercy to be received, or of duty to be performed. Hypocrites forget God all theſe wayes; though their natural memory may be good, yet ſpiritual memory (and that only holds ſpiritual things) they have none. Obſerve hence,

First, *That the hypocrite is a forgetter of God.*

Every wicked man is forgetful of God. Hence we find theſe put together, *Pſal. 9. 17. The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God*: But this is the ſpecial character of an hypocrite, he is a forgetter of God. Conſider this (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) ye that forget God; that is, ye hypocrites conſider this (*Pſal. 50. 22.*) for he ſpeaks of ſuch as had taken the Covenant of God in their mouths; *What haſt thou to do (verſ. 16.) to take my Covenant*
in

in thy mouth ? As if he had said, thou professest to be in Covenant with me, to have an interest in me, Yet when thou sawest a thief, then thou consentest with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers, thou givest thy mouth to evil, &c. Hypocrites take the Covenant of God in their mouths, but cast it out of their lives, *God is near in their mouths, but far from their reins* (Jer. 12. 2.) If the hypocrite did not forget, that God is about his bed, and about his path, and espieth out all his wayes, he could not be so false with God, so polluted in his wayes, so rotten in his inward parts. If an hypocrite did not forget, that God being a Spirit delighteth to be worshipped in Spirit, he would never be satisfied in worshipping him with his body. If he did not forget that God is jealous, that he will not hold them guiltless who take his name in vain, he durst not (which is his every dayes work) take the name of God in vain.

Secondly, observe, That forgetfulness of God (howsoever it seems no great matter, yet) is exceeding sinful, a wickedness of the highest stature.

Forgetfulness of God is therefore a great wickedness, because God hath done so many things to be remembred by. What could the Lord have done more to make himself remembred then he hath done? *Have I been a wilderness to Israel, or a land of darkness?* (saith the Lord, Jer. 2. 31.) the words are an aggravation of their forgetfulness. As if the Lord had said, I have been a light to you wheresoever you go, and wheresoever I go my steps drop fatness for you, and am I forgotten? where can we set a step but we tread upon a remembrance of God? Every creature holds forth God unto us. He hath left his remembrance upon every ordinance, *Do this in remembrance of me*, saith Christ in that great ordinance of his Supper: yea all the works of his providence are remembrancers of him. He leaves an impression of his wisdom, holiness, justice, power, upon all he doth. Now for us to forget God who hath (as it were) studied so many wayes to fasten himself in our remembrance, must needs be extreemly sinful. Further, it is very sinful to forget God, because God doth so abundantly remember us. He hath not only done that which may cause man to remember him, but he hath man alwayes in his remembrance, especially in his own people, *He hath graven them upon the palms of his hands, and they are continually before him.* They who desire to preserve their friends fresh in memory, get their pictures in their houses, or engrave them upon rings and jewels which they wear
alwayes

alwayes about them. But he that cuts the image of his friend in his flesh, or draws it upon his skin, how zealous is he of his friends remembrance. Pictures and annulets may be lost, but our hands cannot fall off. When the Lord would shew how mindful he is of his Church, he assures her that he carries her picture alwayes about him, not drawn upon a Tablet, or engraven upon the signet of his right hand, but upon the palms of his hands; as if he should say, I must lose my self, before I can lose the sight or memory of thee (Isa. 49. 16.) He remembers her so, that he cannot forget her. And because the character and stamps of nature are more abiding and indelible then those of art, therefore he saith, vers. 15. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.* A woman may break the bonds of nature, but God will never break the bonds of his own free-grace. May not all this raise us into Davids rapture of holy admiration, Psal. 8. *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him with such remembrances?* what is a wicked man, that God should give him bread to eat, and cloaths to put on? And what is a godly man that God should give him Christ to eat, and cloath himself withall? that, God should remember us is a wonder of mercy; but what a wonder of unthankfulness is it, that we should not remember God? What, or *who is God, that man should be so mindless of him?* Is not God worthy of all our remembrance? Is it loss of time to call God into our thoughts? Do we ever, or in any thing remember our selves so much, as when we remember God most? it is a wonderful favour that God should be mindful of us at all; and is it not a wonderful sin, that man should be so unmindfull of God?

Thirdly, Observe, That, *Forgetfulness of God is a mother-sin, or the cause of all other.*

It is the cause of this sin of hypocrisie, *Bildad* puts it as a fruit of forgetting God. Forgetfulness of God is three-fold.

First, a forgetfulness that there is a God.

Secondly, A forgetfulness who, or what manner of God he is, *Thou thoughtest that I was such an one as thy self* (Psal. 50.) Thou forgettest what manner of God I am: thou presumest that will serve my turn, which serves thine, or that every thing will please me which pleases thee; thou sayest, because it is no great trouble to thee to steal and lye, &c. therefore it is no great trouble unto me neither.

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Thirdly,

Thirdly, To forget God, is to forget what God requires ; this forgetfulness of these three sorts is productive of any, of every sin.

Lastly, Observe, *They that forget God shall quickly wither, how great and flourishing soever they are.*

The reason is this, because the forgetting of God, is a departing from God, and he that departs from God, departs from the fountain of life. If the rush go out of the water it quickly withers; and if men will depart from God, they shall quickly decay, neither grace nor comforts can hold out separated from Christ. Why is the godly man compared to a tree planted by the river side, which brings forth fruit in his season, whose leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper ? Why is the man that trusts in the Lord compared to a Tree planted by the waters, that spreads out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh? Jer. 17. 7, 8. is it not because the Saints alwayes keep close to God, by Jesus Christ, who is as an everliving fountain of water to them, refreshing and moistening them so, with continual supplies of the Spirit, that *they shall not see when heat cometh?* that is, they shall not be afflicted with those evil effects of heat, drought, and barrenness. They who keep Covenant with God, may possibly feel some decayes, but dye they shall not, they shall revive and sprout up again ; They shall again put forth their leaves as a plant, and their fruit as the garden of Eden ; They shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.

And the hypocrites hope shall perish.

¶

Similavit, dissimulavit, occulte peccavit, per Metaphoram, pollutus, contaminatus.

The word which we translate *hypocrite*, comes from a root that signifies close and covered, and by a Metaphor, polluted, defiled, contaminated, because an hypocrite, though he be outwardly covered, and beautifully painted over, yet his paint is a spot upon him. All painting is but a spot, in comparison of natural beauty. An hypocrite is not so much painted, as polluted. Hence he is called a vile person (Isa. 32. 6.) *The vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity to practise hypocrisie, and to utter error against the Lord.* We have the character of hypocrites, Isa. 58. 3. *They daily call upon my name as a people that would know the Lord: As a people;* an hypocrite doth but play a part in religion, he doth but personate another ; like an actour upon a stage, who puts forth the several postures and gestures of a King, when as himself is some mean fellow. An hypocrite is described acting a double

double part; the first one is, simulation, he labours to appear what he is not, he would seem to have some good which he hath not. And the other is, dissimulation; he labours not to appear what he is, he would hide and cover the evil that he hath. *An hypocrite is one who seems to be what he is not, and would not seem what he is.* He is a Jew outwardly, and his religion circumcision outward in the flesh, Rom. 1. 18. He seems to be religious (Jam. 1. 26.) he is a whited Sepulchre (Mat. 23. 27.) stately on the outside, within nothing but rottenness and dead bones. The hypocrite hath a divided heart, Hos. 10. 3. and a double mind, Jam. 1. 8. He is not half enough for God, and too much for himself.

Hypocrites are of two sorts, some in a large, others in a strict sense. Most wicked men are hypocrites in a large sense, though some are above hypocrisy, they are arrived at impudence. The Prophet speaks of such (Isa. 3. 9.) *The shew of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not.* They declare it not as the mourners in Zion declare their sin, who are ashamed of it; but they declare it as Sodom her sin, that they may delight in it. But though there are some such as these, yet the greatest number of wicked men fall under the notion of hypocrisy in a large sense, because they keep their sins close, and hide them. Hence the works of sin are called works of darkness. Wicked men usually hide their wickedness, and shew that which hath but a shew, their goodness. But in a strict sense, he is a hypocrite that seems to be very religious, who hath nothing but God, and Christ, and heaven in his mouth; but in his heart and secret practises nothing but earth and hell. The hypocrite is like the Onyx-stone, of which Naturalists write, that it is clear and bright in the superficies, but the center is dark and earthy. This generation is pure not only in their own eyes (Prov. 30. 12.) but in the eyes of many men, possibly in the eyes of all men, yet are they not cleansed from their wickedness.

The hypocrites hope shall perish. That is, the time shall come when he shall give over the hope which he hath hoped, or the thing shall fail him, wherein he hoped. First, the object of his hope shall fail him, that is, those benefits, blessings, accommodations and comforts which he looked for in the profession of religion, these shall fail him and prove false hopes. Hypocrites (Mat. 7.) plead with Christ for heaven, Lord, we have prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out devils, &c. but their hopes perished, Depart from

me (saith Christ) *I know you not.* His hope perisheth when he cannot have the thing he hoped for. Secondly, The act of his hope shall fail, his hope shall be so long deferred that his hope shall die; he never had any true ground of hope, and at the last he shall not have a shew of hope. His hope shall perish.

Observe from the name given hypocrites. First,

That hypocrites are filthy and polluted persons. None are so ugly in the eye of God, as they who paint for spiritual beauty. Pretended holiness is more unlovely then professed unholiness to them that can discern it. As it is said of Nabal (1 Sam. 26.) *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him:* So we may say of an hypocrite, *filthiness is his name, and filth is in him.* Nabal had his name from folly, and hypocrites have theirs from filthiness.

Observe, secondly, *hypocrites may be full of hope for a time.*

They have somewhat (though it be unsound) upon which they build, they think what they do and are will serve turn, and go for currant with God: This raises up their spirits. Some hypocrites will be full of hope, even while they are descending to the pit of despair. Some hypocrites are not convinced of their hypocrisie to the very last: such die in peace, while they are going down to eternal war; They go away (as we use to say) like lambs, when their souls are among Lions, and they are tumbling into the place of dragons.

Observe, thirdly, *The hope of hypocrites will deceive and fail them, God rejects their confidences, they shall not prosper in them,* Jer. 2. 37.

Lastly, Observe, *That to lose our hope is the utmost of evils.*

Bildad doth not say that the hypocrite is damned, and shall go to hell, and endure the wrath of God for ever: This one expression, *Their hope shall perish*, amounts to all this and more, if more can be. Do but sit down and imagine in your thoughts, & contrive the utmost of all evils felt by men, yea the utmost (were it possible) of all the evils of punishment that are in the thoughts of God, and all are wrapped up and comprehended in this one word, *Their hope shall perish.* Hell, and wrath, and fire, and brimstone, and the worm that never dies meet in this one word.

Bildad

Bildad goes on to illustrate this by a further instance.

Vers. 14. *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be as a spiders web.*

Vers. 15. *He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.*

The hypocrite clings about the object of his hope, as a man that is ready to drown takes hold on any thing, upon a straw or a rotten stick; but though he lean upon his house, it shall not stand, &c.

These words contain the second similitude, which is both a confirmation and a further illustration of the former; for having concluded in the 13. verse with these words, *The hypocrites hope shall perish*; he (as it were) doubleth and resumeth it here again, *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web.*

The original beareth different interpretations, and from that, several senses have been given of these words.

The word here used for [hope] is not the same in the Hebrew, which we had in the last clause of the former verse, *His hope shall perish*. This word was opened at large in the fourth Chapter at the sixth verse, where we translate it *confidence, is not this thy hope, thy confidence, the uprightness of thy wayes?* Now, besides, that the word signifies *hope or confidence*, it signifies also folly, inconstancy, frowardness of spirit, vanity and levity of mind. And thus some render it here.

This hope shall be cut off.) That word also beareth different interpretations.

1. To be weakned, to languish; and because things which languish and are weak, either are cut off, or are ready to be cut off; therefore it signifies likewise cutting off.

2. Further, the word imports gradually, 1. displeasing, 2. loathing or abominating, 3. chiding or contending.

The words yielding these senses, receive different translations and interpretations.

First thus, taking the former for *inconstancy or folly*, *his folly shall displease him*, or, *his folly shall not please him*: So the Vulgar. *Hypocrites never please God, and at last they shall not please themselves.* The wayes and works of hypocrites are ever displeasing to God, and they shall at last be displeasing to themselves. That's the sense of their translation.

וִּפְּ
Debilitatus lan-
gue factus fuit,
per metaphorā,
maestitia, dolo-
re, et odio affe-
ctus fuit, pro-
prie, tanquam,
βδελύσσει in e-
rem putidem, et
qua nauseam
parit, averfa-
ri, & eam ab-
horrere.
Non enim pla-
cebit & vecor-
dia ejus. Vulg.

And

*Hæc displicen-
tia cum fastidio
quodam & ra-
bescencia con-
juncta est.*

*Secum ipse li-
tigabit, irabi-
tur, quæ omnia
ad mentis com-
motiorem &
anmi crucia-
tum pertinent.
Pin.*

And not only shall the wayes of an hypocrite be displeasing, but they shall be a loathing, an abhorring to him: the Lord loaths him now, *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination*, and he shall loath himself hereafter. There is a double loathing. There is a loathing of repentance. And there is a loathing of despair. The former (though it be unpleasant, yet it) is an happy loathing of our selves. Such loathing of our selves is pleasing to God in the act, and will be pleasant to us in the fruit (*Ezek. 6. 9.*) *They shall loath themselves for the evils they have committed.* And again, *Ezek. 16. 47.* and *20. 43.* the word is taken for this loathing of repentance. But the hypocrite shall have another kind of loathing. What? a loathing of despair, seeing himself utterly lost, and his hopes quite cut off, he shall be an abhorring to himself.

There is yet a third step or degree of sense in this word, He shall not only be displeased with himself, and loath himself, but he shall fall out with himself; his hope shall displease or vex him, into self-anger. Some render the word by contending or chiding: as a man that is displeased with another, falleth out with him, wrangleth and contendeth with him; so an hypocrite, at last, shall chide, contend and wrangle with himself: he shall contend as much with himself at last, as ever the word of God contended with him before. An hypocrite never cometh to a Sermon but God chides him, the Word of God contends with him, and the spirit of God hath a controversie with him; this man will not be warn'd by the chiding of God, nor take that to heart, he still goes on in his hypocrisie. But when no reproofs nor chidings can prevail upon his heart, he is left to the reproof and chidings of his own heart: which will read him such a lecture, and give him such a schooling as he never had in all his life. Conscience may be long silent, and it may long flatter, but when once it begins to speak, and to speak right, it is the most terrible Preacher in the world. There is no *Boanerges* or son of thunder hath so dreadful a voice. Mount *Sina* it self did not thunder so loud as conscience will. And as conscience speaks loud, so it speaks long. An hypocrite shall reprove or chide himself for ever; what a fool was I? what a beast was I thus to flatter my self, thus to mask mine own filthiness, and to dawb over the rottenness of my heart with the fair covering of a verbal profession? Why did I wilfully deceive my self into irrecoverable perdition?

Again, Observe from, *Whose folly shall displease him.*

That

That the Whole course of hypocrisie is nothing but foolishness.

Of all fools the hypocrite is the greatest; and the reason is, because he takes a great deal of pains in profession, and hath no good at all by profession: he ventureth himself many times in the world to persecution; he runs the hazard of his credit, of his estate, of liberty and life. What a fool is this to take so much pains, and subject himself to so many dangers in the outward profession of Christ, yet at last to lose the fruit and benefit of all? *This folly must needs displease him:* he shall at last see what an extream fool he hath been to trouble himself about that which bringeth him in no real good, but will really double and encrease all evil upon him. *No man sins at so dear a rate as the hypocrite.*

A second translation takes the *Noun* (as we) for hope, and not for folly, and retains the former sense of the *Verb*; and so the words are thus, *Whose hope shall loath him*; that is, the thing which he hoped for shall loath him; how loath him? It shall loath him, not formally, but equivalently, because it shall do that which man doth, when he loaths any thing; when we loath a thing, we flee or turn away from it; so *His hope shall loath him*, that is, the thing which he hoped for shall flee far away, and quite depart, it will not come near him. Good shall remove from the hypocrite when he expects and makes after it. An hypocrite at once loaths true grace, and hopes for true comforts: but comfort here and glory hereafter shall loath him, heaven shall shut against him.

Or take it for the act of hope (as others) *he shall loath his hope*, that is, the very hope which he hath had shall be grievous and vexatious to him, nothing shall grieve him more then this, that he hath hoped so much. His hope shall grieve and afflict him as bad as all his afflictions; *Raised expectations disappointed, prove our greatest sorrows.* That man sinks lowest in grief, whose heart was highest in hope. How extreamly shall the hypocrite be grieved, who falls as low as hell, when his hopes were raised up as high as heaven? The hypocrite both in his way, and in his end, is like the King of Babilon. He saith in his heart, *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most high, yet he shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit,* Isa. 14. 13, 14.

Take the words as we translate, so they yield a clear sense, and very agreeable to the original, *Whose hope shall be cut off.* * The word is rendered, *Cut off*, by a Metaphor, because when a man is exceed-

*Quem sustulit
spes sua. lun.
Eum quasi fa-
stidius fugit id-
ipsum quod spe-
ra. i. Jun.*

*Spes ei molesta
erit, quod ea
excidat, nec id
consequatur
quod expecta-
vit. Merc.*

* Sumitur Me-
taphorice, quod
si quis se det
se se torquent, et
vestes, & se
membrorum sua
discindant ac
lacerant &c
velut discent.
Merc.

exceedingly displeased and vexed (as the word properly signifies) he many times tears his garments, and even cuts his own flesh, like the idolatrous Priests of Baall, who were so angry, because they could not get an answer, that *they cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancers, till the blood gushed out upon them, 1 Kings 18. 28. Grief cuts the heart alwayes, and sometimes causes cutting of the flesh.* The Lord complains (Psal. 95. 10.) *Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, it is this word, forty years long was I vexed and cut with this generation,* with their murmurings, backslidings and unbelief. They did (as it were) cut the Lord to the heart; as in another place, *They broke him with their whorish hearts, Eze. 6. 9.* God speaks there as a man whose patience is almost spent, or, as an husband with the disloyalties of an adulterous wife.

And thus we may joyn it with hope, either as hope imports the act of hope, or the object of hope, *Whose hope shall be cut off*, the expectation which the hypocrite hath had shall come to an end; or all time is at hand when an hypocrite shall be past hoping. Observe hence,

Despairing is the cutting off of hope, and such is the condition of an hypocrite. To have hope cut off, is the greatest cut in the world. *Will the hypocrite pray alwayes?* No, at last his prayer shall be cut off; *Will the hypocrite hope alwayes?* No, at last his hope shall be cut off. The Saints in heaven have (in a sense) their hope cut off, because they are above hope: and at last all wicked mens hope shall be cut off, because they are below hope. It is better to have all our possessions cut off, then our hopes. Better have the threed of our lives cut off then the Anchor-cord of our hope cut off, and so we left to the rage and tempest of despair.

Again, joyn it with the object of hope, thus,

All that an hypocrite hopeth for or expects, shall be utterly taken away, and cut off from him.

His worldly comfort will be gone, and heavenly comforts will never come. He shall find that he hath been in a golden dream, that he hath been, as one that is hungry, who dreameth that he is eating, but when he awakes his soul is empty; or, as a thirsty man, that dreams he is drinking, but he awakes, and behold, *he is faint, Isa. 29. 8. When dreams satisfie hunger and thirst, the hypocrites hope shall be satisfied.* Hypocrites shall have as good as they bring. They bring God nothing but words and empty professions; and they shall

shall have nothing from God, but air and empty expectations; their real hopes, or the thing they hoped for shall be cut off. When hypocrites awake out of their sleep, their hopes vanish as a dream. Not only doth the world, but the Christ on whom they hoped, prove a shadow, a fancy, an image, an idoll of their own making; their hearts were filled with leaves, instead of gold, as the devil cozens his greedy votaries, *Their hope shall be cut off.*

And whose trust shall be a spiders web.

As hope before, so here trust, may be put either for the act or object of trust: and both (by a Synecdoche) for the whole profession of an hypocrite.

Hope and trust are often taken promiscuously. There is a gradual difference between them, not an essential: Trust being the strength of hope, or the acting of a strong faith. The original word signifies a very quiet, secure, settled trust; when a man trusts upon, or about a thing, without casting so much as a jealous thought after it. Thus the hypocrite trusts; he never suspects himself; his heart saith all is well, Levit. 25. 18. *Ye shall dwell in the Land in safety*; the word is, *Ye shall dwell in the land in trust*, because an opinion of safety is the companion of trust; when we trust our condition is good, then we think our selves safe.

There are two things noted by this word:

First, boldness and confidence.

Secondly, security and peaceableness. The hypocrite feels no trouble and he fears none; the language of his heart is like that of Babylon, the mother of whoredoms and hypocrisie, *who saith in her heart, I sit a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*, Revel. 18. 6.

This trust where it is true hath a double effect. The want of which discovers the falseness of it in the hypocrite.

First, it confirms and strengthens the heart against all oppositions. And

Secondly; it encourages the heart against all dangers. He that trusts in God will walk thorow the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil: He dares take a Bear by the tooth, or a Lyon by the beard. In both, the trust of the hypocrite faileth. He will work and go on boldly till he meets with opposition: he will work in a fair day, till he meets with a storm, and dangers threaten; but there he gives over. *He that is not acquainted with the assurance of-*

fiſe of heaven, will ſeldome, if at all run hazards here on earth. True truſt brings God and the ſoul together, but the hypocrite never comes near God: and then no marvell if he be affraid to come near danger.

Note from it, before we put the words together, thus much, *That an hypocrite hath a truſt of his own, a truſt like himſelf.*

Whoſe truſt. An hypocrite doth moſt things which the upright and ſincere-hearted do, and he ſeems to have every thing which the upright and ſincere-hearted have. Do they pray? ſo doth he. Doe they hear? ſo doth he. Do they faſt? ſo doth he. Have they faith? he hath faith too. Have they the fear of God? he alſo hath a kind of fear. Have they zeal? ſo hath he; yea the zeal of hypocrifie burns hotter for a blaſt, then the zeal of ſincerity. He hath grace proper to his ſtate; falſe grace for his falſe heart; he hath truſt, ſuch as it is, a truſt which belongeth to all of his rank; ſee the character of it in the next words.

It ſhall be a ſpiders web.

עכר
Tam animal,
quam rete ejus,
quod ſolet con-
texere ſignifi-
cat.

The Hebrew is, *It ſhall be the ſpiders houſe*; the web is the houſe of the ſpider. We have the ſame word, *Iſa. 59. 5. They weave the ſpiders web. Iſaiab ſpeaks of ſuch pretenders, they truſt in vanity, and ſpeak lies.* Theſe were the ſpiders web, which they weaved.

But why is the truſt of the hypocrite compared unto the ſpiders web? I ſhall clear that in four or five particulars, which will be as ſo many notes upon this text.

1. Becauſe the profeſſion, and all the works of an hypocrite are very weak and unſtable, as the ſpiders web is. There is a kind of curioſity in them, but there is no ſtrength or ſtability in them. The ſpider works very curiouſly, but her houſe will not bear any ſtreſs of weather, much leſs force of battery. The ſpiders web is no match for a broom or a whisk. Thus it is with the profeſſion, the truſt of hypocrites, you may ſee a neat ſpinning, a fine thread of profeſſion, accurate weavings and contrivances; but when it comes to a puſh, it is not able to ſtand; if you do but touch it, 'tis gone. Some will ſtand out longer then others, yet all fall, as Chriſt aſſures us (*Mat. 7. ult.*) it is the hypocrite who buildeth his houſe upon the ſand. To have a houſe built upon the ſand, is no better then to have a houſe built in the cieling; when the ſtorm comes that houſe falls; and when the broom comes, this muſt down.

2. The truſt of an hypocrite is called a ſpiders web, becauſe he fetches

fetches and frames it (as it were) out of his own bowels: that whereunto he trusteth is wrought out of himself. That's the nature of the spider, she hath no extrinsecal materialls to build her house with; she doth not hew her stones out of any quarry, or fetch her timber from any forrest (as we may allude;) the materials which she hath, she fetcheth out of her own bowels. The Bee makes an house, and fetcheth the materials from this and that flower: so the Bee makes a comb for a house: but the spider sucks no flowers. Thus it is with hypocrites, their trust and hope is as the spiders web, made out of their own substance; they eviscerate themselves, they fetch all out of themselves. The meaning is, all their trust is in their own duties, in their own strength, in their own stock, in their own gifts, upon these they build, these are their house. We find the Pharisees trust thus grounded, such was his house. (*Luk. 18.*) *I fast twice a week, I give alms, I pay all men their due.* He was very exact in righteousness according to the Law; upon this, and out of this he makes his house; this is to make an house like a spider. *Though it be our graces we trust upon, our trust will be a spiders web.* The believer is well compared to a Bee; the Bee hath an house and honey, but the Bee fetcheth all from abroad, from herbs and flowers: believers have their house to dwell in, and their honey to feed upon, but they suck all from the promises of Christ, yea they suck it from Christ himself; they rest not in the letter of the promises, but they go to Christ who is the matter promised, and the accomplisher of all the promises. Here they build their house, and hew out the pillars of it.

3. *Their trust shall be a spiders web,* in the issue it shall perish like a spiders web. How is that? As soon as the house comes to be cleansed, down go the spiders webs; when the house is swept, the cob-webs are first swept away. Thus it is with the trust of all hypocrites: when God sweeps his house, his Church, he quickly sweeps out these spiders webs (*Isa. 14. 23.*) The Prophet speaks of *the besome of God*; the judgments of God are the besome of God, by which he sweepeth his house. God hath a double besome, or a double use of his besome; he hath a besome of destruction, and a besome of purgation. It is a besome of destruction to hypocrites, and it is a besome of purgation to his Saints. When either the besome of destruction, or the besome of purgation is in hand, the trust of hypocrites is swept away. When the Prophet describes the Lord in his great and terrible judgements (*Isa. 33.*) 14. the Text

saith, *The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness surpriseth the hypocrite, who shall dwell with devouring fire?* God provoked is a devouring fire. How shall stubble and spiders webs stand before him? When trouble comes, the trust of hypocrites goes to wrack; they tremble then, for their trust is but a spiders web, it cannot stand one stroak, or endure the flaming heat. The hope of a godly man grows strongest in times of trouble, he is purified in the fire; and the hope of an hypocrite weakens, till it be none at all in times of trouble, it is cast out of doors amongst the rubbish, or is consumed with the fire.

4. Take this parallel between the spiders web, and the profession of hypocrites. The spider makes his web to catch and ensnare others, to catch the poor flies. She hath a double use of her house, to lye in it, and to entrap flies in it. Her house is a snare. The profession of an hypocrite is a spiders web in this notion; he makes it to catch flies with, to ensnare and deceive the simple, that he may prey upon them: he would count godliness a poor thing did he not make a gain of godliness; that brings him in food and cloathing, he lives upon it. This his deceitful web is so fine spun, and fairly woven, that you cannot easily discern any thing, but truth and beauty in it: hypocrites cannot be distinguished by the out-side of what they do; their lewdness is under a cover. Some tell us that the Hebrew word for an hypocrite, may be derived from another, which signifies a cloud; the wickedness of such is wrapt up in a cloud; whence the latine word for a crafty, dishonest man, imports one who casts a cloud or a mist before his dishonesty: So that it is hard to make this discovery, till effects and issues make it. Only God looks quite thorow all clouds and coverings, he sees what is in the heart, though man cannot. God sees his contrivances are only to serve his turn, and attain earthly ends.

5. The hypocrite like the spider, thinks himself safe and out of harms way, when once lodg'd in this profession: He is ready to boast that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. So much for the similitude.

Now follows the application of the similitude in the fifteenth verse.

Vers. 15. *He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall take hold of it, but it shall not endure.*

Bildad goes on to bringdown his similitude to this particular.

Thws

Nebulo, à nebula, qui men dactis suis nebulam quandam & tenebras obijcit.

Animalculum illud valde imbecillum & maliciosum atq; meditandum potius quam prudens domicilium edificat in quo se tutum existimat. Bol.

Thus the spider doth, and thus the hypocrite: the spider leans upon his house, there he dwells; and so the hypocrite, he leans upon his house, there he dwells and rests himself.

The word which we translate *lean*, is often used in the old Testament, to note the *vital act of faith*, the act of recumbency; Faith in the vital act of it is a resting upon another. Now false faith imitates true faith, that will be resting and leaning. Faith whether true or false cannot stand alone, it must have a *lean-to*.

He leaneth upon his house.

It noteth leaning upon a staff, or upon any stay (1 Sam. 1. 6.) *Saul leaned upon his spear, being weary in the battel.* And Prov. 3. 5. *Lean not to thine own understanding.* Wise men, men of deep reach and judgement, lean to their own understandings, their wits are their props (Isa. 10. 20.) *The remnant of Israel shall no more stay themselves upon him that smote them, but they shall stay upon the Lord, or, they shall lean upon the Lord, the holy One of Israel, in truth.* (2 Sam. 22.) 19. *they prevented me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my stay.* God prevents his people with mercy, and their enemies prevent them with unkindness; but the love of God out-runs the malice of man; his love stays up those whom malice would cast down. The Lord was my stay. And hence, the *Noun* of this *Verb* in the Hebrew signifies a staff, because we use a staff to lean and rest the body upon (Isa. 3. 1.) *Behold the Lord of hosts doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water. The stay of bread, or, the staff of bread;* because bread is that upon which the life of man leans or depends, as we depend or lean upon a staff. Bread is elegantly called a staff, because bread supports the life of man, as a staff doth the body. It implies this also, that the power, virtue and strength by which bread doth sustain us, comes from without; *The staff of bread;* he doth not call the bread it self a staff, but he saith, there is a staff of bread, the bread must have a staff (of blessing from God) or else it cannot be a staff (of strengthening to us) As the bread is the immediate staff of our bodies, so the blessing of God is the immediate staff of the bread: the bread leaneth upon the blessing of God as we lean upon the bread. As an hungry man leans upon his bread, so an hypocrite leans upon his house, *He shall lean upon his house.* That's his stay.

But, what is his house? *He shall lean upon his house.*

יָנַח

Nistus, innisus
est, reclinatus
fuit, incubuit
totis viribus,
per Metapho-
ram, confidat.

Scita est Me-
taphora cum
fulcrimentum
panis usurpat
pro pane fulci-
ente, significans
foris vim illam
panis accedere.
Ut enim gres-
sus senum re-
guntur baculo,
ita panis dici-
tur habere ba-
culum Mol. in
Isa. 3. 1.

The

The house of this hypocrite it is two-fold; or he hath two houses. He hath a worldly house, and he hath a spiritual house. He hath one house made out of earthly materials, and another made out of heavenly materials.

*Domum impij
vocat bona &
facultates ejus
quibus homines
se fulciant, jux-
ta illud, opes
divitis arx ejus
valida. Druf.*

He hath an house made out of worldly materials, and so some interpret this place, *He shall lean upon his house*; that is, upon his riches, upon his relations, upon his greatness, upon his friends, upon his correspondencies, upon the estimation that he hath abroad in the world, upon his reputation with his neighbours at home.

These framed and put together are a house which the hypocrite builds for himself, upon these he rests: and that's a truth, the world is an hypocrites support, the house upon which he leans. The money in his chest upholds him, not faith in his heart; his goods please him more then goodness. He easily believes that he is in the favour of God, because he hath so much favour among men. That's one house.

Bildad might aim at this, because *Job* was a man of a full and vast estate, the richest and greatest of all the men in the East; as if he had said, *Job, thou hast leaned upon thy outward abundance, upon thy sheep and oxen, upon thy children and servants, and now thou findest all but a spiders web, swept away in a moment.* Yet (I conceive) he means rather a house built of heavenly materials. And there are three sorts of heavenly materials, out of which the hypocrite builds his house.

1. Gifts: he hath knowledge and understanding in the word and wayes of God, the gift of prayer, the gift (it may be) of tongues, of prophesie and preaching. These are excellent materials, and upon these he builds his trust, that he is in a good estate.

The second sort of materials are holy duties, he prays, he hears, he fasteth, and he gives alms, and the like; these he doth, and out of these materials he builds his house, very strongly he hopes.

Thirdly, he hath finer stuff then all this to build his house of, he buildeth upon supposed graces; he can tell you, he hath faith, he hath love, he hath patience, he hath humility, and he hath sorrow for sin; he can count all these things, and out of these he buildeth himself an house of special confidence, such a house as he doubts not will stand all windes and weathers: he hopes to stand safe in judgement, under the roof and goodly fabrick of this house.

Out of these three sorts of materials, spiritual gifts, spiritual duties, and supposed spiritual graces; upon all these, and out of these he buildeth, and thinks he hath made an house that shall stand for ever.

The point I shall give you, taking in those three sorts of materials, is,

That gifts, duties, and supposed graces, are the stay and the staff, the house, and the strength of hypocrites.

Upon these they lean, and in these they secure themselves; they rest upon this bottome for eternity; Hence they even dare to plead with God himself about it. (Mat. 7. 22.) *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out devils, and done many great wonders?* they trusted upon, *Have we not prophesied? Have we not prayed? have we not done wonders?* They thought those sufficient materials to build them a tower which should reach heaven it self; who can doubt but they who do such things as these shall do well? The gift of prophesie, the power to cast out devils, and work miracles, sound high, and make a great noise. Yet at last, this tower of their confidence proves but a Castle in the air, or a spiders web. How confident were they who could plead thus with God: He hath opened the secrets of heaven to us, and do you think he will shut the gates of heaven upon us? we have preached, we have been instruments of saving others, and shall not we be saved our selves? we have cast out devils, and shall we be cast to the devil? we have not walked in an ordinary tract of profession, but we have traded in wonders and done miracles, we have amazed the world with reports of the great things we have done, is all this nothing? Thus they plead with Christ, as if he were bound to save them by the Law of these services: yet Christ tells them, *Depart from me, I know you not*: Surely, thought they, God will fetch his fewel for those everlasting burnings from among the rude Heathens, or debauched drunkards, adulterers, &c. not from among us. Were it not a wonder greater then any we have wrought, if we who have wrought great wonders should not be admitted? one of the Ancients represents them in such an amazement. *What means this strange, unexpected answer from Christ, depart, &c.* Must we depart who have lived so near thee? Must we be damned, whom thou hast thus honoured?

The Apostle Paul (Rom. 2. 17.) speaking of the hypocritical Jews, discovers

πὶ βέλτεροι τοῦ
ἐνόντος καὶ παρὰ
τοῦτον τὸν τῶν
ἀγίων, &c.
Chrysost.

*Tibi appletur in
quod legem
scriptam acce-
peris. quod fre-
quens es in lo-
quutione & audi-
tione legis.*

discovers such a confidence, *thou reatest in the Law*, as a man retesth in his house, there he sleeps and is quiet; so these in the Law, there they were quiet, that is, in the priviledges and outward profession of the Law, or in a literal and outward obedience to the Law. The Jews built their house upon, or with legal righteousness, *Thou reatest in the Law*; he speaks both by way of narration, and likewise by way of redargution: He tells what they did, and how ill they did in doing so. *Paul* rejects this as refuse stuff, as hay and straw, as dross and dung, as *confidence in the flesh*, (Phil. 3. 3. &c.) Those things which acted or enjoyed, are spirit, being trusted to, are flesh. So prayer is flesh, ordinances are flesh, the righteousness of the Law is flesh; yea, *Grace it self trusted to is flesh*. The duties which Christ hath appointed are the house of the hypocrite: but Christ himself is the house of the upright; he would be found in him, (Phil. 3. 9.) not in duties or inherent graces. Saints desire that much grace may be found in them, but they dare not be found in graces; they would ever be acting graces, but never trusting to them.

Secondly, Observe,

An hypocrites hope is high and strong, that his estate is good now, and that he shall receive good at the last.

He leaneth upon his house. Some are without hope in the world, of whom we may speak as the Apostle of an heretick (Tit. 3. 11.) *they are condemned of themselves*. Some men have the sentence of condemnation in their own hearts. But there are others, as you see here, who have great and strong confidences in themselves, who live and die with this confidence too; this they do upon the former witness. As the Apostle *John* speaks concerning the witness which the Saints have for heaven, *There are three which bear witness, &c. and these three are one*: So there are three which bear witness to the hypocrite, and these three are one; they agree in one to deceive, as the other to give assurance.

First, The world that giveth many a man a witness and letters testimonial, that his estate is good, his neighbours say so, they flatter him, and cry peace peace to him.

Secondly, Satan applauds him, the devil gives him his good word, and tells him that certainly his estate is very good.

Thirdly, his own heart will seal to all, he shall have the witness in himself, as it is spoken of the true believer. So that the hypocrite having such witnesses, a witness within himself, a certificate under

der the hand of Satan, and letters commendatory from the world, all this must needs give him strength of hope, that his house shall stand for ever.

But see the issue, *He leaneth upon his house*, What then ?

It shall not stand.

The word signifies to stand firmly and strongly, or to continue standing. He thought that the materials which he had brought together, and the hopes which he had raised upon them, would have been as Mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but he leaneth upon it, and it shall not stand.

רָדַף
Sterit, subsistit,
mansit.

Whence observe, *All that an hypocrite trusteth unto shall deceive him at the last.*

It shall not stand. Their webs shall not become garments, *Neither shall they cover themselves with their works*, Isa. 59.6. The language is proverbiall, importing highest disappointment : Who would weave a web, if he knew he should never have a garment by it ? Or work hard, when himself must go naked ? Jer. 7. 1, 2. the Lord sends to the people by his Prophet, *Say to this people, Trust not to lying words*; that is, words which will deceive and fail you, you trust and lean to them, but they will fall away from you : What were those words ? Even that they had a goodly house to lean to, they cryed, *The temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord* : but I hope that's a strong house, as well as a beautifull, a man may lean upon that, upon the temple of the Lord, and do well. No, *The temple of the Lord leaned upon will be but a spiders web* ; God gave the Jewes a temple to worship him in, and many of them worshipped the temple. We adore every duty we depend upon, and give the Ordinances of God the honour of God. We can stand no more by such trust to Ordinances, then we shall by the neglect of them.

These, and all the materials before mentioned, will be found too weak, they shall not stand. Gifts cannot commend to God. If a man had the tongue of men and angels, if all the knowledge that ever was scattered in the world were brought together into one head ; this cannot commend him unto God. The devil is as full of knowledge as he can hold, and yet he is as full of wickedness as he can hold. Duties cannot commend to God.

And there are two special reasons why the hypocrites duties cannot.

First, He is not at all changed in duties. He prays and sins, hears and sins, professes and continues wicked closely, if not openly.

Secondly, He leans upon his duties. Could we suppose true grace leaned on, that could not stand. *Nothing is a sufficient strength for us to stay upon, but the free grace of God, and Jesus Christ:* Lean to these houses, for they will stand for ever. Of all other houses you shall say as *Adam* did of his wife, *Gen. 3. 12.* (and it is the word here used in the Text) *The woman which thou gavest to be with me, to stay by me, to be a helper and a support to me, this woman hath given me, and I did eat, she hath been the cause of my ruine.* The same will be said of all the gifts, and duties and graces, which we stand upon. God hath given them us, and he hath given them us as meet helpers, but they will deceive and ruine us, if we lean on them. We shall fall by them, if we hope to stand by them (*Psal. 23. 4.*) *Thou art with me in trouble* (saith *David*) therefore I shall not fall; it is this word, *Thou standest with me.* Christ will stand by us at all times, *Thou standest with me, or by me:* When the world faileth, and when gifts fail, and when duties fail, yea, when graces fail, in degree and activity, then *Jesus Christ*, and free grace will stand by us, *Isa. 26. 7.* *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. Christ is the only lean-to.*

There is one clause further,

He shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

This clause is of the same importance with the former, only the sense is somewhat heightened. It notes, that the hypocrite shall not only lean upon his house, but he shall take strong hold upon his house, *He shall fasten on it;* so *M. Broughton.* A man may lean to a thing and have no hold of it; he that takes hold of a thing would make it firm to himself, and himself firm to it. Thus the hypocrite leans upon his house and takes fast hold of it, if it would fall from him, if any attempt to pull him away from it or he sticks to it, he will not let it go.

The word signifies to hold fast, strongly and prevailingly. *Jobs* wife (*Chap. 2.*) speaks thus, *Dost thou still hold fast thine integrity?* And God himself speaks in the same language concerning *Job,* *Dost thou not see, though thou hast moved me to afflict him without cause, how he holdeth fast his integrity?* the hypocrite (after his manner, *Mordicus tenet*) holds his duties, performances, gifts, tushy, or (as it were) with his very teeth, he will hold them to the

מִיָּמֶיךָ
Deducitur à
Gnamad, mu-
lier quam dedi-
sti mihi, ut ad-
staris juvaret,
essetque vica-
rium auxilium,
ipsa author
hujus mali ex-
sistit. I Egius
in loc.

מִיָּמֶיךָ
Quasi apud me
stans.

מִיָּמֶיךָ
Eam mordicus
tenens, se in ea
stabilam & fir-
mum semper
fore putans.
Mere.

the very death, and not let them go, the hypocrite will not give over, will be not beaten off from trusting to these false and weak propes, here he sets up his rest, he will die by his gifts, his duties his outward profession, and go no further.

It is our glory to hold integrity fast, to hold grace fast, yea and duties in point of practice and obedience; but it is our sin and danger, to hold them fast in reliance and confidence.

It is a sad use which some make of this truth, when they hear that hypocrites hold fast upon duties, &c. they let go their duties; they let prayer go, repentance, and sorrow for sin go; they say, it is no matter for duties, they need not trouble themselves, Christ doth all. This is to turn the grace of God into wantonness. We must let go both our graces and our duties in point of justification, but hold them we must as our lives, in conversation, and the tenour of our lives. Prayer, hearing, fasting, repenting must not die, while we live; Do them we must, but glory in them we must not.

He holdeth them fast, but (yet) it shall not endure. That's the last thing. We see as often as the hypocrite rises to take hold of his hopes, so often his hopes fail him: (before) *It shall not stand (now) it shall not endure.*

The word signifies, it shall not be established to him, he would establish this house to himself, but it shall not be established, his worldly estate shall not be established, his duties, his graces, his gifts, shall not be established.

The word notes that establishment which is made by a politick act or edict. It is the Jews operative word, in which they enact laws, *Ezth. 9.* The word is used three times, (v. 29, 31, & 32.) for a politick establishment of that decree, about the deliverance of the Jewes from the conspiracy of *Haman*, they established or made a Law for it. Laws are for continuance, therefore they are *established* and *settled*. An hypocrite would do so too, he would enact and establish what he doth, *but it shall not endure*, it will be null'd and repeal'd quickly.

The word also signifies, that which is *substantiall* (*it shall not endure*) that is, it shall not be as a substance, it shall appear at last to be but a shadow, *Gen. 7. 23.* Every living substance was destroyed, it is this word, that is, every thing that stood up and subsisted. So, *Deut. 11. 6.* the word signifies the substance and outward estate which *Korah, Dathan and Abiram* had, *They and their substance went down into the pit.* The hypocrite thinks his estate is a

לֹא יִקְוָה

à radice

קוֹ

Surrexit, ad
standum ere-
am stabili,
solidus mansit,
perseveravit.

substantiall estate, yet both his worldly house, and his spirituall house, builded as was before described, shall moulder away and rot, they shall not endure. 1 King. 7.21. Solomon set up two pillars in the Temple, and an hypocrite in his building sets up two pillars, and he calleth them after the name that Solomon called his, the text saith, *The one he called Jachin, and the other, Boaz; Jachin, he will establish, and Boaz, strength.* Which may note that the People of God, who worship him in his temple, have two pillars, two everlasting pillars, they have *Christ, and the free grace of God to trust upon*; these are the two pillars of the Temple, that support our hopes, and the one is truly called *Jachin, established*, and the other, *Boaz, strength*. The hypocrite hath a Temple, an house, and two pillars, upon which he makes these inscriptions, *Upon his worldly estate he writes Jachin, Established; Upon his spiritual estate he writes Boaz, Strength*; but he will be deceived in both, *They shall not endure. When a wicked man begins to fall, nothing shall support him.* As it was said of Haman in regard of his outward honour, *If these men be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt fall utterly*: So though when a hypocrite sees his house falling, he takes fast hold of, and endeavours to support it, yet it shall not stand, fall it shall. *The righteous falls and rise again, he falls seven times in a day, and yet is raised up again*, Prov. 24. 16. but when an hypocrite begins to fall he falleth down, down, for ever. It is said of the righteous (Psal. 37. 24.) *Though he fall he shall not utterly be cast off, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand*; but when a hypocrite falleth he shall be utterly cast away, for his duties only hold him by the hand; he hath only somewhat of himself to support himself with, therefore though he take hold of it, *It shall not endure.*

*Ubi semel cor-
ruerit impius
non erigetur.
Merc.*

J O B, Chap. 8. Verſ. 16, 17, 18, 19.

He is green before the Sun, and his branch ſhooteth forth in his garden.

His roots are wrapped about the heap, and ſeeth the place of ſtones.

If he deſtroy him from his place, then it ſhall deny him, ſaying, I have not ſeen thee.

Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth ſhall others grow.

THe context of theſe four verſes holds forth to us the third ſimilitude, by which *Bildad* illuſtrates the condition of an hypocrite.

The ſimilitude is explained in the 16, 17, and 18. verſes, and applied in the 19th.

The hypocrite was firſt compared to a *ruſh* and a *flag*. Secondly, to a *ſpider's web*. But now to a *goodly tree*. This third ſimilitude grants the hypocrite the beſt of his condition, and puts him in the faireſt poſture that can be imagined, and yet all proves nought; his root is but rottenneſs, and his bloſſome ſhall go up as the duſt; or his branches ſhall be cut down, and his root ſtubbed up. It is as if *Bildad* had ſaid; *If you think I have ſpoken too little and too low, or have debaſed the hypocrite more then was meet, by comparing him to a poor ruſh or a flag, and his eſtate to a ſpider's web; then take him in his higheſt notion, let him be looked upon as a green flourishing tree before the Sun, faſtening his roots, and ſpreading out his branches, yet you ſhall ſee, at the laſt, deſtruction is his end. Behold, this is the joy of the hypocrite.*

That's the ſumme, and the general ſence of the words.

Three things are held forth in this ſimilitude concerning the hypocrite.

Firſt, His outward happineſs and flourishing eſtate in the 16th verſe, *He is green before the Sun, and his branch ſhooteth forth in his garden.*

Secondly, His hurtfulneſs, or the anoyance which he doth to his neighbours and brethren, ſhadowed out in the 17. verſe, *His roots are wrapped about the heap, and he ſeeth the place of ſtones.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We have his ruine or cutting down, his destruction or pulling up, in the 18th verse, *If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him saying, I have not seen thee.*

His flourishing estate begins in the 16. ver.

He is green before the Sun.

307

*Madere humi-
dum succosum
esse.*

The word (*green*) signifies moist, juicy or sappy, proper to trees: So M. Broughton translates, *He is juicefull before the Sun.* And others, *He is full of sap.* In which sense the word is used, Chap. 24. 8. of this book, *They are wet with the showers of the mountains,* or, *moyst and sappy,* receiving in many showers from the mountains.

A tree green, juicy and full of sap, is in the height of his strength and beauty: Juice and sap is to the tree, as bloud to the veins, and marrow to the bones of a man; and therefore as a young man in the prime and strength of his age, is described by having his veins full of bloud, and his bones full of marrow, so a tree is described in it's greatest verdure, by having his root and branches full of sap and moisture. The hypocrite may be such a flourishing tree, *He is green before the Sun.*

Before the Sun.

לפני שמש

The Hebrew is, *Before the face of the Sun.* The word *Shemish* (*the Sunne*) signifieth a Minister or servant, because the Sun is the great servant of the world, and ministreth those benefits of light, heat, influence. This (by the way) should have kept the Nations from adoring it as a God, which both in name and nature was their servant. But what means this, *Before the Sun*?

1. Some take, *before the Sun*, to be only this, openly conspicuously, and in the sight of all; for to do a thing *before the Sun*, is to do it without covert or secrecy, 2 Sam. 12. 12. Thus the Lord threatneth David, after that sin of privacy committed with Bathsheba, *Thou didst it secretly, but I will do this before all Israel, and before the Sun*: So the hypocrite, is *green before the Sun*; that is, he flourisheth in the eye, view and light of all men. He hath fair leaves and branches of outward profession in the Church, and of outward prosperity in the world.

2. *Before the Sun*, that is as a tree in Summer, when the Sun returns to us, or turns upon us. In the beginning of the spring the Sun returns: having travell'd furthest off from us, it comes to the

verticall

*Ante solum, i.e.
palam in oecu-
li omnium.*

verticall point, and turns about to us again. So that, *before the Sun*, or the Sun looking towards us, is a description of the spring. And so it is, as if he had said, *As a tree when the Sun cometh towards it in the Spring, and shines hot upon it in the Summer, makes a fair shew*: So the hypocrite is very green, joyfull, full of contentment, whilst he hath the Sun of prosperity shining upon him, whilst those warm rayes of outward comforts, heat and nourish him, so long he is green and flourishing.

3. *Before the Sun*, that is (according to others) before the Sun shines too hot upon him, before the Sun scorches and withers him; as if he had said, The hypocrite is a green tree, till the heat comes upon him, till the Sun ariseth in his strength: but as soon as the heat of the day, or the year comes, this tree withers. An hypocrite cannot abide the extream heat of the Sun, whereas the godly have such an everlasting supply of moisture and sap, that let the Sun shine as hot as it will upon them they are green still. The ordinary heat of the Sun is put for prosperity: the extream heat of the Sun, is put for persecution. So, the meaning may be this, *He is green before the Sun*, that is, before the Sun of trouble and persecution ariseth, or (as some render it) before God looks angrily upon him and scorched his leaves, till then, *He is green and flourishing*. *Before* refers both to time and presence.

4. Others take it as a description of the hypocrites outward flourishing, which may be such sometimes as *holds out before the Sun*, that is, when the Sun is very hot upon him; And then this clause stands in opposition to the rush, which *whilst it is yet in its greenness withereth before any other herb*. If the Sun rise hot upon the rush, it withereth presently, where it wants outward moisture. But here *Bildad* seems to grant, or at least to suppose, that the hypocrite may possibly rise to such a flourishing estate, that he holds his greenness, even before the Sun, in a great deal of heat and trouble. Thus *Before* notes presence.

Either way the sence is good, *He is green, before the Sun* cometh with his heat, that is, he cannot endure the scorching time of trouble: or, *he is green before the Sun*; that is, before some trouble or scorching, before some heat of persecution, this hypocrite may stand, *He is green before the Sun*.

And his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

Branch.] The word which we translate branch is derived from
a root

*Antiquam sol
veniat. Bibl.
Reg. Ante ex-
ortum & ardo-
rem solis, i.e.
ante quam sol
inardescens
eum aduratur, qd.
priusquam à Do-
mino puniatur
& visitatur.
Ardor est ira
Domini. Merc.*

*Ante solem, i.e.
in ardore solis,
arboris more,
quæ pulchre a-
liquandiu suc-
crescens æstum
non timet, in
calore solis im-
mortalis adjuvatur
& alitur.
Merc.*

PM
Significat la-
ctantem seu
infantem lac
sugentem; per
Metaphoram
suntur pro sur-
culis aut tenero
ramo qui sgit
arborem. Tene-
riores ramuscu-
li lactantibus
pueris sunt si-
miles.

a root which signifies a little sucking child, or an infant; and the reason is, because branches which come from the tree, draw moisture and sap from the tree, as an infant doth milk from the mothers breast: therefore we elegantly in our language, answering the Hebrew, call such branches *suckers*, and we cut them off where we see many sprouting from one fruit-bearing tree, because they draw too much from the tree, and hinder the fruit, that's the meaning of the Hebrew word, *His suckers*: So M. Broughton translates, *His suckers sprout out over his orchard*. By these branches we may understand either his children, or his honour, his relations, or his reputation, these shoot forth and shew themselves as branches from a tree, *His branches shoot forth in his garden*.

In his garden.

Horum dicitur
dice Ganan,
velavit meta-
phoricè prote-
ctum, quod sepi-
us protegi solet.

That is, in that place which he hath fenced or taken in for himself; a garden is a plot separated and enclosed from those places which lie open and in common. So much the Hebrew word imports, coming from a root which signifies to protect or to fence a thing about, because gardens are places fenced, hedged, or walled in, *Cant. 4. 12. A garden enclosed is my beloved. Eccles. 2. 5, 6. I made me gardens and Orchards, and I planted trees in them of all (kind of) fruits, I made me pools of water to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*

Per horum in-
telligit omnes
rationes, quibus
suam tuetur &
auget magnitu-
dinem. Merc.

His branches shoot forth in his garden.] That is, he appears very beautifull and glorious, very green and flourishing in his state or condition, in his dignity and honour. He lives as in a garden or paradise: So the word is translated (*Gen. 2. 8.*) *And the Lord God planted a paradise, or a garden of delight*. The hypocrites garden is all that by which he preserves and keeps his worldly comforts, as we do plants and flowers of profit or delight in gardens. Thus the hypocrite grows as a goodly tree, and shooteth forth his branches.

This is the first part of the description of his flourishing estate. Hence note a point or two.

First, In generall (which hath heretofore been observed, therefore I shall but touch it.) viz.

That a wicked man, an hypocrite, may abound exceedingly in outward prosperity.

He is a tree, green before the Sun, and shooting forth his branches in a garden.

Second-

Secondly, Note, *That the thriving of hypocrites, their greenness and flourishing is only outward.*

The tree is green before the Sun, but he is withered in his soul. Hypocrites do all before the Sun, to be seen, or in the sight of men. They are of those who rebell against the light, which would keep them from sin, and they say, *No eye sees us*, while they are sinning. But they love the light which shews any good they do; then they say, *O that all eyes did see us.* Pharisees pray in the markets, and blow a trumpet when they give alms, that the ears of all, as well as the bellies of the poor, may be filled with their charity. *Come see my zeal*, saith *Jehu*. *Moses* was faithfull, but he never said, *Come see my fidelity.* *Joshua* was valiant in the battels of the Lord, yet he never said, *come, see my fortitude.* The upright heart cares not to be thus before the Sun: He delights in secret holiness. His goodness is not less priz'd, or less pleasing to him, because it is hidden. He takes infinitely more content in being and doing good, then in being known to be or do good.

Thirdly, Taking, *before the Sun*, to note the extream heat of the Sun, we may observe thus much from it,

That an hypocrite may endure trouble and persecution for his profession.

He is not like the rush which presently withereth, but he is sometimes like a tree that standeth it out before the Sun a great while. We know that many have not only performed outward acts of holiness, but they have sometimes suffered in a holy cause; they can be passive in obedience, as well as active, and yet have fallen away at the last. Before the Sun of prosperity the hypocrite will continue green very long; and before the Sun of persecution he may continue green a while. It is conceived by most that *Alexander the Coppersmith* spoken of by *Paul* (2 Tim. 4. 14.) as a man very grievous to him, *Alexander the Coppersmith did me much evil*, he opposed the Apostle, yet, I say, this *Alexander* is conceived to be the man of whom we read (Act. 19. 32.) that stood to *Paul*, when he was in that danger at *Ephesus*; there he had like to have lost his life for appearing on his side, the text saith, *They dragged him out of the multitude to the market place.* It is possible for an hypocrite to be green before the Sun of persecution, at least before some scorching beams of that Sun, though he is not able to bear it when it comes to the utmost tryal, to the extream heat of the day.

Thus we see the hypocrites greenness in his branches, yet that is not all, for in the next verse we find his roots also, he is seemingly set below, as well as beautiful above. And when a tree hath flourishing branches, and firm roots, what can be desired more? For, as when a tree is cut down root and branch, it is then utterly taken away; so when a tree flourisheth, root and branch, it is in best estate, and highest perfection. Both these meet here, not only doth he shoot forth his branches in his garden, *But he wrappeth his roots about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.*

His roots are wrapped about the heap.

The root of this hypocritical tree, is that by which he fastens himself, any accommodation or strength which he hath in the world, credit, riches, friends, whatsoever strengthens a man, that's his root: it is as necessary to fasten a tree, as to moisten and feed a tree: Now (saith *Bildad*) he spreads his roots, he hath not only excellent branches outwardly, but he layes his matter so, that he hath rooting also in the world; yea, he seems to have rooting in the Church too.

His roots are wrapped about the heap.

71 à radice
771

*Voluit à summo
ad imum.*

The word in the *Hebrew* signifies, to roll, or to bring things together, to put them up in a heap. Hence the Verb is used for that act of the soul in believing, whereby a Christian gathers himself together, and all that he hath, and layes it upon the Lord, *Psal. 22. 8. He trusted in the Lord*; the *Hebrew* is, *He rolled himself upon the Lord*. Hence it is translated to signifie; First, a tempest, wherein the winds roll and are enfolded together. Secondly, a wave of the sea, which is a rolling water. Thirdly, as here, a heap, because in a heap, a great many stones are gathered or rolled together. As *Gen. 31. 47.* after that contest and debate of *Laban* with *Jacob* about his departure, *Jacob* said, *Let us gather stones together, or roll stones together, and make an heap*; and *Laban* gave it a name, he called it, *Jeger-shahadutha*, which is to say, *A heap of witness*, because these stones were rolled together for a witness.

Lastly, (which sense is applyed by some interpreters to this text) The word signifies a spring or a fountain, *Josh. 15. 19.* because springs and fountains are as the gathering together of waters: the

sea is called the gathering together of waters (*Gen. 1.*) there waters are rolled, and laid as upon a heap; and so proportionably every spring, fountain and river, is a place wherein the waters are rolled or wrapped together. Some translate the word thus, *His roots are wrapped about the water, or about the fountain.* And that further sets forth the seemingly sure and steadfast estate of the hypocrite; as he hath goodly green branches above, so his roots are wrapped about the fountain, he looks as if he were planted by the waters side, as the flourishing tree described, *Psal. 1.* A godly man is as a tree planted by the rivers side; so the hypocrite seems to have his roots wrapped about the waters, as if he had an everlasting supply from an everliving fountain, as if his leaves should not wither, or his fruit fall off from him. That's one sense.

But most go with our translation, *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, they are intricated and folded about the heap of stones; and so the meaning of it may be given three wayes.

1. In that it is said, *His roots are wrapped about the heap, the heap of stones*; it notes his thriving against all opposition, here shadowed by heaps of stones. Heaps of stones are hinderances to the growing of a tree, to the rooting of it: Therefore we set or plant trees in places free from stones; but to shew that he may even overcome, conquer and subdue those difficulties which hinder his growth, he saith, *His roots are wrapped about the stones.* The seed that was cast in stony ground could not take root, the stones hindered it from a due depth of earth, *Mat. 13. 15.* So that *Bildad* according to this sense magnifies the hypocrite, and speaks high of him, *He wrappeth his roots about the stones*, he grows in places of greatest advantage. A wicked man may conquer oppositions, and prevail against the pull-backs which hinder his worldly, yea and his seeming spiritual estate; he may encrease when he wants encouragements and means of increase, yea, he sometimes encreases against stops and discouragements, he thrives among stones.

Impius aliquando floret inter varia impedimenta.

2. *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, notes that he thrives, or will thrive, if he can, though it be to the hinderance and damage of others: for by the heap some understand the foundation of an house, where stones are artificially heaped or laid together, not a natural or accidental heap. Trees that grow near a house shoot their roots under or about the foundation of the house, and so may be dangerous to the whole structure. Thus the hypocrite will

Ita late radices diffundat ut fundamenti struem offendar in edibus Domini sui. Jun. In aliorum damnum propagatio denotatur. Idem.

grow if he can, though he inwraps himself about the foundation of another mans house, raising or securing his estate upon his neighbours wrong or ruine.

Hypocrites care not whom they injure, so themselves may thrive, though they undermine the foundation of another mans house, and loosen his estate, to fasten their own.

3. *His roots are wrapped about the heaps,* may note the firmness, and the seeming strength of his standing. He is rooted, not in some loose and sandy earth, or in tougher clay, but his roots are wrapped about a heap of stones. As (*Mat. 7.*) the house founded upon the sand could not continue when the storms came, but the house founded upon the rock did; so a tree that is rooted only in loose, sleight ground, cannot stand against a great tempest, we see such trees blown down; but that which is rooted among the stones, and wrapped about their heaps, that which interweaves and incorporates it self (as it were) with a rock, this hath strength against all storms. Thus hypocrites pretend to Christ, and say they have wrapped themselves about that rock; they will speak great words, and bid defiance to all the world can do, professing they have laid up a good foundation, and that the munition of rocks is their defence.

And seeth the place of stones.

Domum lapidum cernit, id, est inter lapides felici ex provenerit.
ἐν μέσῳ χαλίκων ζήσεται.
Sept. Inter lapides commorabitur.
Vulg. Domum lapidum oculis vidit. Drus.

The words may be translated, *He dwelleth and he stayeth in the place of stones*, or, *he plants himself among the stones*; and then it carries the same sense with the former clause: So Mr. Broughton, *He platteth about the house of stone*. The Septuagint thus, *He shall live in the midst of the stones*: And the Chaldee Paraphrast, *He shall see with his eyes the place of stones*. We are near that sense, *And seeth the place of stones*: That is (for all these rendrings of the Hebrew will come to a fair agreement, and the result is this) he lives, abides, converses or dwells, even, where there seemes to be the least probability of his stay, he stayeth in the place of stones.

בֵּית

Domus vel generaliter sedes, vel locus quod aliquid capit, vel continetur.

The Hebrew is, *house of stones*; and house is taken either for that special place wherein men dwell, or generally for any place; so that, *the house of stones*, is either a house naturally built; Nature useth a kind of art, or an house artificially built: art is but an imitation of nature. *He seeth*, that is, he seems to abide or continue in that house of stones, he is very eminent or glorious in that place:

place : The same word is read (*Dan. 8. 5.*) where *Daniel* speaking of his vision, saith, *The Goat which he saw in the vision had a notable horn;* the Chaldee is, *a horn of sight,* he had a horn of sight, that is a conspicuous or a notable horn : or, as others render it, he had a perplexed, enfolded, or enwrapped horn, a wreathed horn. So that the word signifies both the conspicuousness of a thing, and likewise the infoldness and complication of it.

A learned Interpreter gives yet another sense, *He looks into the house of stone;* that is, he hinders the light, or darkens the house by perking up so proudly by, or near the windows; as if he had said, he annoyes his Masters house both below and above, at the foundation, and at the windows.

The state of the hypocrite thus settled and made firm among fiones, is yet a tottering one, it will not be able to stand, the 18. verse shews this.

Verf. 18. *If he destroy him from his place, it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.*

There is much difficulty in giving a clear sense of these words.

If he destroy him from his place.

If he) Who is the Antecedent to this *he*?

There is no antecedent exprest in the Hebrew. Some understand it thus, *if he*, that is, if the Lord, if God come to take vengeance on this man, who seems to be a tree, so highly grown, and so deeply rooted.

Secondly, we may carry on the similitude thus, *If he destroy him*, that is, if the Gardner or the Husbandman ; if the Master or owner of that ground or place, seeing a tree thus luxuriant, growing so near the foundation of his house, and so wrapped about the place of stones, hindering the light, darkning the windows of his house ; if he come to destroy or cut him down, it shall deny him.

Or, thirdly, *if he destroy him* ; that is, if the Sun destroy him : So. Mr. Broughton translates, *If the Sun root him up from his place.* But can the Sun root a tree up from his place ? Yes, the Sun roots up a tree, when the Sun, before which a tree flourishes a while, casts his beams so hot upon it, that it is scorched. Extream heat draws out all the moisture of a tree, and kills it. In that sense the sun may be said to root up a tree, the Sun killing the tree, causeth it to be rooted

קרנהו

Cornu aspectus est cornu conspicuum & emi-nens, quod supra alia cernatur.

Alij cornu perplexitatis, id est, perplexum & intricatum.

Merc.

rooted up. Thus we see divers Antecedents answering the *he*, the agent in the Text.

If he destroy him from his place.

על

*Abstrahit, de-
voravit, Meta-
phorice, corrup-
pit, destruxit,
consumpsit, quia
quod degluti-
tur perditur,
absumitur.*

*Pereleganter
qui vinum & u-
ram deglutiunt,
a vino absorb vi-
dicuntur. Pined*

The word which we translate *destroy*, signifies properly to swallow down, as a man swallows down meat and drink : And it signifies to swallow as a man swallows when he is very hungry ; a man that is very hungry eats his meat greedily ; he throws it down whole into his throat rather than chews it. Now, because when meat is swallowed down, the meat is consumed and spent, and is destroyed and comes to nothing, therefore the Hebrews elegantly translate that word, which properly signifies to swallow up, to destroy ; to destroy is to swallow up : And in that sense (*Isa. 28. 7.*) wine is said to swallow up a man, that is, to destroy and consume him. *Intemperate persons swallow up wine, and at last wine swallows up them*: The wine drinks up their estates, their wits, their healths, their lives, their all at last. It is a metaphor taken also from cruel and savage beasts, who devour men ; as *Jacob* saith of *Joseph*, *Surely a wild beast hath devoured, or swallowed him up* : And (*Psal. 35. 25.*) we have that word applyed to wicked men, conspiring against the Saints, they say, *We have swallowed him up, ah, so would we have it* ; that is, we have utterly destroyed him, this pleases, this goes well on outside.

Then the meaning is, though the tree be in this state, yet if the husbandman come, he can quickly destroy it from his place : Yea, though it be thus fairly grown, and firmly rooted, the Sun is able to kill this tree, and to draw out all it's moisture, and so leave it dry and seared, fit only to be stubbed up for fewel. Or take it for an hypocrite, to whom the similitude referreth, If God come to destroy him out of his place, to swallow him up, there's an end of him quickly, *It shall deny him, saying, I have not seen him.*

From this consideration, that the destruction of the tree is spoken of so immediately after the flourishing of it ; that word, *He is green &c.* is no sooner out, but he adds, *If we destroy him &c.* We may note,

That the destruction of hypocrites and wicked men cometh often upon them, in the height of their prosperity.

Even in the time of his greenness, he shall be destroyed, and when his roots are wrapped about the heap. Trees stand so long sometimes that they wither of themselves, and then we cut them down

down for the fire; but this man shall be cut down like a tree in his prime, in his flourishing, when affliction and withering seem farthest off, when he thinks least of destruction, then it shall come upon him; when his estate is like *Jonah's* gourd, a very pleasant plant, and a great rejoicing to him, a worme smites the roots and kills it.

That of *Job* (Chap. 20. 22.) is full to this point, *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits*: A strange thing, that a man should be in straits, when he is in greatest enlargement, that a man should be emptied when he is full, that a man should be nothing when he hath all sufficiency about him, yet thus it shall be, *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits*. As a godly man hath a sufficiency in his wants, yea a fulness of sufficiency in his wants: So on the other side, an hypocrite whole heart is false with God, hath want in his sufficiency, yea want in the fulness of his sufficiency. Which may be understood two wayes; either that his fulness in the greatest sufficiency of it is unsatisfying; or that his fulness in the greatest sufficiency of it, is upon decaying and abating. (*Psal. 78. 13.*) *Whilest the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God fell upon them*; while meat is in the mouth, rich clothes upon the back, while store of money is in the purse, while the land brings forth abundance of encrease, even in all these sufficiencies a man may be in straits. As it was with *Agag* (1 Sam. 15.) *Surely* (saith he) *the bitterness of death is past*; he thought himself safe, and that the storm was quite blown over, but then, in that nick of time comes *Samuel* and cutteth him in pieces. The Apostle *Paul* saith (2 Cor. 1. 9.) *I had the sentence of death in myself*; that is, I concluded I could not survive those sufferings, I thought myself a lost man: yet the Lord delivered him, and fetched him from the grave. But when hypocrites (like *Agag*) have the sentence, yea the sweetness of life in themselves; when they say peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes, as pain upon a woman in travel, and they shall not escape: God cuts them off. It follows,

If he destroy him from his place; what then? It shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

Here is a further aggravation of his misery, when he is destroyed, *It shall deny him*; what shall deny him? Some read it thus, *his place shall deny him*. Can a place speak, affirm, or deny? No, it cannot; but it is usual in Scripture, by a *Prosopopeia*, a fiction of a person

a person to ascribe speech to beasts, to trees and places too, things not only without reason, but without life. Such an elegancy is here, *It shall deny him*; that is, when he is destroyed, if any man shall ask the question, where is this man? Where is this goodly tree that stood here before? The place shall answer, *He is not here now*.

כִּהְיֶה

*Mentietur ei
ἀνὴρ ὁ λέγων
ταύτῃ Sept.
Per prosopopei-
am tribuit ser-
monem et men-
dacium rei ina-
nimæ; quod
insolens non
est in his libris.
Ita è loco suo
excidetur et
interibit, ut
nullus jam ag-
noscat eum ibi
unquam fuisse.
Merc.*

The Hebrew is, *The place shall lie*; the place shall feign and say, we have not seen him; we know not what is become of him? So men use to answer, when they are either affraid or ashamed to own one that is asked for.

Some understand it of a person: *Then one may deny him: I see then no more*, so M. Broughton. Suppose a traveller, who oftentimes past by, and saw this goodly tree, when he cometh to the place again, sees it no more, the tree is down: So he, who hath past by such a mans house, and beheld his goodly seat, when he comes another time, there is no such man there, the man is gone, *It, or he shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee*.

I have not seen thee.

We have near the same words, *Psal. 37. 35. 36.* where the flourishing estate of a wicked man is shadowed under the notion of a tree, *I have seen the wicked flourishing like a green bay tree, &c. (yet) he past away, and he was not*; as much as to say, if it be asked, what's become of him? a man shall answer, he hath not seen him; yea, *I sought him, but he could not be found*. Such a sense hath been shewed (*Job 7. 18.*) upon those words, *The place thereof shall know him no more*; a clear riddance shall be made of all men out of the world, especially of wicked men. In that description (*Dan. 2. 35.*) of the four Monarchies, under the similitude of a great Image whose head was of gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet of iron and clay; the text saith, *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them*; or, as the Chaldee, *They were found in no place*: A time will come when all Monarchies and worldly kingdoms, which have stood up in so much lustre, which have dazled the eyes of all beholders with their splendour, and kept all their neighbour nations under by their power (a time shall come) when this clay, and iron, and brass, and silver, and gold, shall be all beaten to pieces, so that

that if a man ask, where are the *four Monarchies*? What's become of the pomp and state of those great Empires? *The places of them shall know them no more*; no man can tell where they are. There is such a meaning here: This green tree, this hypocrite shall have his branches so pull'd off, his roots so stubbed up, that it will be hard to give an account what's become of him.

We find the happy and flourishing estate of the Church and people of God described, as if no place were large enough for them to dwell in (*Zech. 10. 16.*) *I will bring them again out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria, &c.* that is, I will gather my Saints, my Church together from all the parts of the world where they have lived (while they could not live, but sculking in corners) I will bring them together so conspicuously, that there shall be no place found for them; that is, no place capacious enough to receive them and their families. We have the same promise of enlargement (*Isa. 49.*) *They shall say, The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell.* Now, as the Saints shall be gathered together so eminently and abundantly, that no place shall be found big enough to hold them; so the hypocrite with all his greenness and verdure shall be so blasted and rooted up, that the place where he was shall not be visible, as his; he shall be so far from filling all places, that he shall fill none, *The place where he dwelt shall spue him out, and by any remaining symptome it shall not be known, where that man was.*

So then, the sum of all may be given thus, taking the comparison from the tree to this wicked man;

That as a tree highly grown and deeply rooted, may be so cut down and stubbed up, that it shall not be known whether ever it grew upon that place or no; so a wicked man, though for a while he flourisheth and overcometh all impediments that hinder him, in the eye of the world, yet at last himself and his family shall be so clean removed and swept away, his name and memory so blotted out, that there shall not be any print or foot-step of his being upon the face of the earth.

Whence note, *That the memory of wicked men shall perish for ever, none shall own them.*

If they be asked about them, they shall say, *we have not seen them.* Peter in his temptation denied Christ, *Mat. 27.* when they asked him, saying, *Art not thou one of his Disciples?* No, saith he, *I know not the man.* As the Saints under temptation, and as hypocrites in their daily conversation deny Christ: so the time will come

when hypocrites and wicked men shall be denied themselves, their places shall say, *We know them no more.* They shall be remembered only as *Pilate* is remembered in that which is called the Apostles Creed, who stands there upon record for his wickedness, cowardize and injustice in condemning Christ, whom he knew to be innocent. *Wicked men are either forgotten, or else remembered with a brand of disgrace. They who have been adored and flattered, and crept to like little gods, shall not be owned by the meanest men.* Even their parasites who have hung about them will fall off from them, and say, Who, we know them? we know no such men. It is prophesied (*Zech. 8. 23.*) of the Jewes who are now a despised and scattered people (yet still a people in the heart of Christ) that God will bring them forth at last, and they shall be a people so much honoured, that *ten men out of every Nation shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* The despised Saints, such as the world hath cast out, and said, We will not see or take notice of them, shall be honoured or envied of all; Men will be glad to take hold of their skirts, and say, *Come, let us go with you;* O that we might have a part and portion with you, for we know that God is with you! O that we had lived the lives, and might die the deaths of the righteous! O that our beginnings had been, and that our latter ends might be like theirs! Likewise a time will come, when hypocrites and wicked men shall be despised by their admirers, and cast out, as not worth the looking on by their grossest flatterers.

Cic in Orat.
pro Arch. poet.

It was a great honour which the Oratour gives *Homer*, a Heathen Poet, who was a man of such reputation, that many great Cities strove for him: One said, he was born here; another said, he was born there; a third, among us was the place of his birth. All desired to own him, because he was a man highly honoured for his learning in those times. Soon the other side, every place shall be ashamed of some men; this place shall say, we have nothing to do with him; and that place shall say, we have nothing to doe with him; one shall disclaim him, and another shall disclaim him, all shall refuse him. *It shall be the honour of Saints to be desired of all; and it shall be the shame and punishment of wicked men, to be cast out and disregarded by all. They who despise God, shall at last be lightly esteemed among men.*

Bildad having thus enlarged his similitude, in all the parts of it, and at last laid the hypocrite as low as forgetfulness, so low that

no man will own him, as he is alwayes so low that God will not own him, he concludes triumphantly against him.

Verse 19. *Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.*

Here's his conclusion.

This is the joy.] The word which we translate joy, signifies the highest joy, a kind of leaping for joy. It is an allusion to doggs or spaniels, who (you know) when their Masters come home, leap about them for joy, and in their language bid them welcom. Such a joy is here meant, a joy lifting up the heart, a leaping, an exulting joy. The word is often applied to the joy of the Saints, they rejoyce, and (as it were) leap about Jesus Christ, they triumph in the favour of God. The leaping, the exulting joy, the best joy, all the joy which an hypocrite hath, is but this, which hath been described; Is it not a desirable joy? a godly joy sure? the words are ironical, *This is the joy of his way.*

Of his way.] Way is taken for the course, purpose and institution of a mans life, for the tenour of his conversation, which he holds in the world, *This is the joy of his way: This is it.* The particle is demonstrative, This is it which I have told you; as if he had said, cast up all the comfort and happiness of that flourishing tree, of the hypocrite, this is all that it comes to, his end is to be rooted up, and not so much as to be owned by those that knew him before.

There are three things which I should observe from this, *This is the joy of his way.*

First, That an hypocrite may have much joy in his way. He may rejoyce much in his condition, and think all's well. *False hopes can produce false joyes.* False faith brings forth a comfort like it self, a fading comfort, a shadow of comfort, as that is but a shadow of faith. The fancy of faith is usually fuller of joy then true faith. Satan helps forward this joy, and God for a time will not hinder it. Faith (though feigned) gives the soul a sight of such things as are worth the rejoycing in, and a supposed title to them will move joy, as well as a real title doth. The stony ground received the word with joy; the promises are delicious to the sensitive and rational part, as well as to the spirituall and regenerate part. Hence (Heb. 6.) they that fall away are said to have had tastes of the *joyes of the world come.* An hypocrite may think himself in hea-

ויוון

Dicitur quando gaudio gestimur, ut canes solent quando peregre adveniēti Domino adulantur. En hęc est exultatio vię ejus ironice dictum. Hęc est letitia qua sibi placebit in magnitudine sua. Viam appellat statum in quo erat. q. d. en quo redeat ejus gaudium dum ita sese effervet. Merc.

ven sometimes, and then like one in heaven, he cannot but rejoyce. *He may have a glimpse of heaven upon earth, all whose heaven is earth. This is his joy.*

Secondly, *This*, may be demonstrative, and answers the question; what is his joy? It is this, His worldly comforts, his flourishing outward condition is his chiefest joy. Then note, *The joy of hypocrites is chiefly bottomed upon outward things.* It is not the joy of the Lord, no, nor joy in the Lord: *Rejoyce in the Lord, and again, I say rejoyce*, is the Gospell-command. An hypocrite cannot rejoyce thus. When he rejoyces in the Lord, somewhat besides the Lord causeth his joy. He rejoyces in his green boughs, in his goodly branches, in his supposed strong roots; but to rejoyce in God as God he knows not how. *Dauids joy* was the opposite of this (Psal. 4. 6) *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and that will put gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their corn and wine encreased.* Let me have the Sun-shine of thy love, and then though I have nothing but darkness and clouds from the world, I shall rejoyce. But what saith the hypocrite? let my corn and wine encrease, let the Sun of outward prosperity shine warm upon me, let me have my greenness of creature-contentments, let me have credit and fair repute among men, these will put gladness in my heart; These glad his heart, when he hath not a dram of grace or goodness there.

Thirdly, *The joy of an hypocrite is but for a moment*, It is a perishing joy. *This is the joy of his way*; you see what it amounts to, how well it lasts. His greenness is turned into withering, his root rots, and his fruit falls off. *This is his joy.* He is like those spoken of in the Epistle of Jude (vers. 14.) *Trees twice dead, and plucked up by the roots.* That's the conclusion of the hypocrite: he hath a name to live, but he is dead, *twice dead*, naturally dead in sin, and judicially dead under wrath: he was born spiritually dead, and his whole life is a passage to eternall death. He hath rejoyced a while, but he must mourn for ever. *The portion of hypocrites is weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Mat. 24. 51.) Their joy is but for a morning or a day, weeping comes at night, & that night hath no morning after it.

And out of the earth shall others grow.

Some read, *Out of the earth shall somewhat else, some other thing grow*: We, out of the earth (when these are removed) other persons shall grow, who shall inherit the place, and possess the dwelling

dwelling of these prosperous trees. For he follows the similitude of a tree; when, or where one is pulled up, another is planted and grows up in it's room. Or, others shall possess what he hath gotten. In which sence Job speaks (Chap. 27. 16, 17.) *Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.* Which words may be a comment upon these, *Out of the earth shall others grow*; that is, others shall rise up, God will bring a new generation to enjoy his ill-gotten substance, and eat the sweet of all his Labours. Solomon (Eccles. 2. 18.) was much afflicted, because he knew not who should grow up after him. *I hated (saith he) all my labour which I have taken under the Sun, because I shall leave it to a man, and I know not what he shall be, whether a wise man or a fool.* It is a part of the vanity which lyes upon man-kinde, that after all a mans labour and paines, he must leave all unto some body, he knows not certainly who. But there is a greater and sorer vanity upon the hypocrite; he seldome stayes to take his part, *He shall not roste that which he hath taken in hunting,* (Pro. 12.) that is, he shall not have the benefit himself of what he hath, but others (unthought of) shall come out of the ground and grow in his place. *This is the upshot or sum of all his misery, he hath laboured for others in temporall things, and he hath got nothing for himself in spiritual things.*

Further, the words may carry this sence. That

When wicked men are taken away, the righteous shall grow in their roome.

Pull up the bryars and thorns, and then vines and fig-trees, lilies and roses will grow the better. When wicked men are removed, good men will prosper.

Again, *Out of the earth shall others grow*; they were not worth the ground they went upon, though they were worth a great deal of ground, therefore out of the ground shall others grow. God will raise up a generation which shall be more faithfull and serviceable unto him.

There is a fourth sence of this expression, *Out of the earth shall others grow*; that is, out of the meanest and lowest condition others shall grow: and so it carries an opposition between the condition of an hypocrite, and of a godly man. The hypocrite in his flourishing greenness shall be cut down to the ground, but they whose hearts are sincere and upright, though they are low as the ground,

Alij, qui alieni erunt ab eo, & quasi e terra alia germinabunt, in bona ipsius succedentes juxta illud, rapisti. & sunt justo opus peccatoris. Drus.

ground, though they are upon the earth, and are trodden down as mire in the streets, yet they shall grow up. They who were growing high shall be cut down, and they who were below shall grow up; such as they feared not nor suspected, shall prevail over them. *They who are lowest, even as low as the earth, shall be raised, built up and set on high in the world, when God speaks the word.*

There is an Exposition of this whole context, about which (because many close with it) I shall give a brief account. Divers of the learned understand this third similitude, not as describing the state of an hypocrite, but as an instance in opposition to the state of an hypocrite, set forth by the rush and by the spider in the former verses.

Hence it is that the *Italian* version begins the sixteenth verse thus, *But the perfect man is green before the Sun, &c.* And so the sense may be given to this effect. As if Bildad had said, *Though hypocrites wither like a rush, or like a flag, though they are suddenly swept down like a spiders web, yet a godly man is a green tree before the Sun; he is not like a rush without water, but like a tree planted by the rivers side, which is able to endure the heat of the Sun, yea the hottest Sun of persecution: [His branches shoot forth in his garden] he is no wild tree, no tree of the forrest, or of the wilderness, he is a tree of the inclosed garden, which if it want the water from the clouds, the Gardener will take care to water it with his hand. Or [his roots are wrapped about the heap, about the fountain;] he is strongly set, and hath water continually to feed and supply his branches; Thus the Church is so described by Balaam (Numb. 24. 6.) How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! as the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the rivers side, as the trees of Lign-aloes, which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar-trees besides the waters. Thus the godly mans roots are wrapped about the fountain, and there he is fruitfull; though the Sun shine hot upon him, yet it cannot exhale his moisture faster then the river can supply him with more. And he seeth the place of stones, he will live upon a flint, having a lively root of faith continually sucking in refreshings from Christ, under whose protection and favour he remains strong and abounding in the worke of the Lord. [But if he destroy him from his place, it shall deny him] that is, if the wicked of the world attempt to root the godly man up, the place, that is, the men of the place, shall take part with him, own him, and deny to give him up into the hands*

hands of thoſe who would deſtroy him. But if the place ſhould not ſecure him, if the power and violence of the enemy deſtroy and pluck him up, yet this is his joy, a godly man may be deſtroyed, but none can deſtroy the joy of a godly man. [This is the joy of his way] he delights in perſecution, he is as ſorrowfull but alwayes rejoycing, even in death it ſelf. [And out of his earth ſhall others grow] He ſhall have a bleſſed poſterity to ſtand up in his ſtead, in whom he ſhall live, when he is dead. Or, if the power of the adverſary root him out of his earth, in which he lived, and drive him from this ground, from houſe and home, he ſhall grow in another earth (The originall may bear that ſenſe.) If he be removed from this place, he ſhall grow in another place; if you take him from his own Countrey, he can grow in any Countrey; and if he be plucked from all Countries, he will grow up to, and in Heaven. De terra alia
germinabunt.
Pagn.

Thus the whole Context may be made out as a ſimilitude of a godly man, in oppoſition to the hypocrite. But I rather acquieſce and ſettle in the interpretation before, that it is a third deſcription of the condition of an hypocrite. The originall and our tranſlation fairly carry it ſo.

Bildad having thus far proſecuted the point, vindicated the juſtice of God, and illuſtrated his former proof by a threefold ſimilitude, ſhuts up and ſtates the point for God, that *He is juſt*, For he will not hurt the innocent, neither will he help the evil doers, &c.

J O B, Chap. 8. Vers. 20, 21, 22,

Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man neither will he help the evil doers.

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.

They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to naught.

THese three verses are the epilogue or close of Bildads discourse with Job: having in the former parts of the Chapter asserted, and with great clearness illustrated the justice of God in his dealings against impenitents and hypocrites; he now concludes in a mollifying language, with assurance of his favour and goodness unto those who return and humble themselves. Yet this he interweaves with threats of the displeasure of God seen in the effects of it, against the wicked, in the twentieth and two and twentieth verses.

It is, as if Bildad had thus said, *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man. Job, thou maist perceive, by what hath now been spoken, that God is no enemy to the righteous, nor no friend to wicked men: Thou seest what the portion of a wicked man is from God, and how just God is in giving him such a portion; yet know, that mercy shall act as gloriously in the hand of God, as justice doth; as God is not unjust to favour hypocrites, so neither will he be unjust to forget the righteous and the perfect man: the hypocrite shall perish, but he will fill the mouth of a godly man with laughing, and his lips with rejoicing.*

Or, if we consider his speech more distinctly, we may see two negative acts of justice, one toward the perfect; the other toward the hypocrite, with the effects of both.

His justice acts towards the perfect man, in that, *He will not cast him away.* The effect whereof is, *The filling his mouth with laughing, and his lips with rejoicing.*

His justice acts against the hypocrite, thus, *He will not help the evil doers.* The effect whereof is, *That evil doers shall be clothed with shame, and that their tabernacles shall not be.*

We may cast all into a form of argument. First, to the generall; and then to the particular case of Job.

He that doth not cast away a perfect and a good man, is just and righteous in his dealings and administrations.

But God doth not, will not cast away a perfect, and a good man.

Therefore he is just and righteous in his dealings and administrations.

Then, to the particular case of Job.

He that doth not cast away any perfect man, will not cast thee away, if thou art perfect.

Therefore, Job, return, make thy way perfect before God, and He will not cast thee away. Or take this inference. God will not cast away a perfect man: therefore surely thou hast a great deal of imperfection or insincerity in thee, because God hath thus cast thee off, and laid thee aside.

The like arguments may be framed upon the other part of his justice, in his dealings with the wicked.

From the general sense of the Context thus given, I come to open the particulars, as they here lye in order.

Behold God will not cast away a perfect man.

Behold Is here a strong affirmation. This is a certain truth, *God will not.*

The strong God, or the puissant, will not cast away a perfect man. God hath infinite power, but he putteth none of it forth, to this purpose; he never layes out himself in opposing those who are perfect and righteous, *The powerful God doth not cast away a perfect man.*

Cast away.

The word which we translate, *cast away*, was opened at the 14th verse of this Chapter, and in the fifth Chapter, vers. 9. There it was translated by despising, *Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord*, cast not away, or cast not off the chastening of the Lord. And in the 14th verse of this Chapter, *The hypocrites hope shall be cut off*, he shall cast away his hope, or his hope should cast away and abhor him, for so the word bears. The Seventy translate it to that sense, *He will not cast off*; that is, he will not reprobate, or disapprove, he will not reject or discountenance a perfect man. And M. Broughton, *Loe, the omnipotent will not loath the perfect*. Either of the senses are full enough to the Text.

72
Deus fortis non
abstinet poten-
tiam suam ad con-
terendum sim-
plices. Pined.

DKD
Fastidivit, re-
probavit.

Non reprobavit
innocentem. 70

Missis.

Only take notice that in the words there is a figure; for when it is said, *That God will not cast away a perfect man*; this is not all the meaning, as if God made no other reckoning of perfect men then thus, that he would not cast them away; more is intended then exprest, namely, that the Lord doth highly esteem and prize righteous men; he layes them, as it were, in his bosome and next his heart: thus the Lord deals with the righteous, *His not casting away, is a near imbracing.*

There is a two-fold casting away; First, Temporal. Secondly, Eternal: and in neither of these senses doth God cast away a perfect man. Not only shall he not perish eternally, but not temporally. He doth not reject or cast him away for a moment; his love is an everlasting love, and there can be no breaches or gaps made in it, so as to cut off his love to the person, although he often signifies displeasure against his sin.

07

The perfect man.

The word we had in the first Chapter, where it is used to express *Jobs* compleatness in spirituals: A compleatness, not in degrees, but in parts; sincerity fill'd up his soul, and so perfect-ed all the limbs and members of his inward man. Observe hence,

First, *A gracious soul shall never be rejected of God.*

Whatsoever God doth in the world he will never do this, *Heb. 13. 5. He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* If God doth not leave a perfect man, he will not cast him away. The Apostle puts the question, (*Rom. 11. 1.*) *Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.*

Perfect men are Gods jewels, not the rubbish or off-scouring of the world, though the world count them so. A wise man will not cast away jewels.

Perfect men are Gods servants, his faithful servants; all the willing service he hath done him in the world (on this side Angels) is done by these men. A wise man will not cast away such as are truly serviceable un to him.

Perfect men are Gods children; they are born of God, and sons of the most high. Natural love will not cast away a child.

Perfect men are Gods portion, the lot of his inheritance, his revenue.

revenue comes in, he hath his incomes of glory, by them. A man will not despise his own glory, he will not reject his own inheritance.

Further, they who are perfect come to him in his Son ; and he hath pawned his truth for it (*John 6. 37.*) *He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out:* As if he had said, this thing is furthest from my heart of any thing in the world. God calls after many who goe away from him, but he casts away none who come to him. None come to him till he draws them, therefore he will not drive them away who come.

Again, Perfect men have the Spirit of God. God cannot cast away or stop his ears at the voice of his own Spirit. They have the earnest of his Spirit ; if God should go about to put them off, or lay them aside, they would shew God those tokens and pledges of his love, the earnest he hath given them to assure their hearts.

Lastly, He hath tied himself to them in the bond of a Covenant, they are fast to him in the everlasting bonds of his own love; therefore they cannot be cast off. So he promises his people (*Levit. 26. 44.*) though they should provoke him to afflict them, yet he would not reject them utterly; he might put them into the hand of their enemies, but he would never cease to be their friend, *For all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away.* (Many think when the Saints are cast into trouble, that God hath cast them away : no, there is no such matter, when they are in their enemies hand, God holds them still in his hand, yea, in his heart.) *I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my Covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God.* The Covenant holdeth God and his people so fast together, that they shall never part.

We find the Church complaining greivously, as if she were cast away (*Psal. 44. 9.*) *Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame, and goest not forth with our Armies :* and verse 23. the Church prayes, *Arise, O Lord, cast us not off for ever.* So (*Psal. 60. 1.*) *O God, thou hast cast us off :* and verse 9. *Who will bring me into the strong City ? Wilt not thou, O God, which hadst cast us off ?* God (to sense) casts off his own people, when he casteth them into dangers : but even then their faith takes hold of God, and Gods love takes hold of them. Though all this be come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falsly in thy Covenant (*Psal. 44. 17.*) neither

had God forgotten them, or dealt falſly in the Covenant: they were his people ſtill, and as near unto him, as when they were furtheſt from thoſe troubles.

God caſts away ſome indeed, but they are ſuch as he never had within the bonds of his Covenant. He caſts away wicked men, as rubbiſh, as filth and dirt; ſuch the Prophet ſpeaks of (*Hof. 9. 15.*) *My God will caſt them away, becauſe they did not hearken unto him.* Theſe were imperfect, not perfect men. God caſts theſe away, not from any intereſt they had in him, but becauſe they never had any. Such as will not hearken unto the word of God, God will caſt away; why? they caſt God away, when they caſt the Word of God away. They caſt the Covenant behind their backs (*Pſal. 50.*) no wonder God caſts them behind his back; he throws them out of doors, when they throw his truth out of their hearts. Perfect men love the truth of God for ever, and the God of truth loves them for ever.

Secondly, (For as was ſaid, theſe words expreſs leſs then is meant.) Obſerve,

That perfect men are highly eſteemed by God.

He prizes them greatly, he delighteth in them, *They that honour me, I will honour*, ſaith God; not only will I not caſt them away, or abhor them, but I will honour them. God eſteems and prizes them, though the world diſeſteem and reject them. There is many a ſoul which the world tramples under their feet, as the mire in the ſtreets, which at that time God layes in his boſome. Chriſt imbraceth ſome in his arms, whom the world, yea, whom their brethren hate, and ſmite with tongues (*Iſa. 66. 5.*) *Your Brethren that hated you, that caſt you out for my Names ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified* (Not only the wicked world may do this, but brethren, even thoſe that are brethren indeed, in the main, may poſſibly hate a perfect man, and caſt him out) *your brethren that hated you, and caſt you out for my Names ſake; but the Lord at that time loved them, as it follows, But he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.*

And if God doth not only not caſt away perfect ones, but eſteem them, then take theſe three cautions.

First, Ye that are perfect, be ſure ye keep cloſe to God, doe not caſt him off; do not caſt away the word, any one truth or command of God. Caſt not the wayes of God away, for he will never caſt you away.

Secondly,

Secondly, Ye that are perfect, *Cast not away your confidence,* Heb. 10. 35. The Apoſtle had ſhewed how cloſe God would ſtick to his people; now, ſaith he, it if be ſo, if he will bring his promiſes to paſs, *then caſt not away your confidence.* There is a great ſtrength of engagement in it, when we read that God will not caſt away his people, that they ſhould not caſt away their confidence in God, *which hath great recompence of reward.*

Thirdly to all, take heed of caſting off or ſleighting any perfect man; we ſhould act towards men, and think of them as God doth. It is beſt to love where God loves, and to love moſt where he loves moſt. *Negative promiſes, and negative threatnings, have greateſt force in them.* God holds them ſaſteſt, and loves them deareſt, of whom he ſaith, *I will not caſt them away. God will not caſt away a perfect man.* There's a negative promiſe. Now ſee the portion of the wicked, that's given out in a negative threatning: God ſaith not what he will do againſt them, but what he will not do for them, *Neither will he help the evil doers.*

He will not help them.

Some read it, *He will not put forth his hand to evil doers.* So the letter of the Hebrew imports. And there may be a three-fold ſenſe given of that reading. *Putting forth the hand,* notes, firſt, our taking men into ſociety, fellowſhip, and familiarity with us: when we would ſhew a man how we love him at our hearts, we put forth a hand, and take him by the hand. Now (ſaith he) God will not take an evil doer by the hand, to welcome or entertain him, to countenance and reſpect him (Exod. 23. 1.) *Put not thy hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witneſs:* Be not of the ſame ſide, communion and fellowſhip with him, in giving witneſs.

Secondly, (As the Septuagint gives the ſenſe) *He will not put forth his hand,* that is, to receive a gift or an offering from wicked men. When a gift or a preſent is brought, the receiver (if he would teſtifie his liking and acceptance of it) puts forth his hand and receives it. Now (ſaith Bildad) *God will not put forth his hand to receive any offering or gift from wicked men;* the oblations of wicked men are an abomination unto the Lord, *The good deeds of evil doers are evil in his ſight. He had no reſpect to Cain and his offering.* He did not put forth his hand to receive Cains offering, but he put forth his hand to receive Abels offering. This is a profitable ſenſe.

Non porrigit
manum malignis. Vulg.
Ad amicitiae
ſædus pertinere
videtur.

Nec ullum mu-
nus impij acci-
piet. Sept.
q d. Non por-
riget manus, ac-
cepturus munus
impiorum dona
non ſunt Deo
grata. Pined.

Thirdly,

פ'ינ'י
 Denotat fortiter
 apprehendere,
 aut potius ap-
 prehendere
 id est fortare, &
 roborare, hoc est
 prestare auxi-
 lium.
 Improb' is non
 f'ruet nec eos
 juvat. Merc.

Thirdly, It rather refers to Gods not assisting wicked men. So Mr. Broughton renders it, *He will not maintain the hand of the mischievous.* To put forth or stretch out the hand, according to this Hebrew phrase, implies strong holding, or the taking of strong hold upon any thing, so as by taking hold of it to strengthen and confirm it, to give it help and assistance. A man that would give assistance to another in any business or work, puts forth his hand to him. When we want help, we usually bespeak a friend, *Pray lend me your hand.* Now here, *The Lord will not put forth his hand to evil doers*; that is, the Lord gives them no assistance or help in their wickedness. If wicked men say, Lord, *lend us thy hand*: no, saith he, I will not lend you my hand. We find this phrase frequent in Scripture. That (Gen. 19. 16.) illustrates it fully; where Lot being warned to go out of *Sodom* (verse 16.) *while he lingered the men (that is, the Angels) laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth, & set him without the City.* They laid hold upon their hands: It is the word of the text. When the Lord sees wicked men, in any distress or danger (as Lot was in *Sodom*) or when they want help and assistance in any business, he will not be merciful to them in taking them by the hand, or in laying his hand strongly upon them, either to pull them out of the danger, or to give them help in difficulties. The sin of *Jerusalem* is charged upon her in this language by the Prophet, in a parity with that of filthy *Sodom* (Ezek. 16. 49.) *Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy*: that is, she did not relieve, comfort, or help them. The sin opposite to this is charged upon the false Prophets by *Jeremiah* (Chap. 23. 14.) *They strengthen the hands of evil doers*, either by counsel, or by countenance, by flatteries or connivance. We read (Nehem. 6.) how often the enemies sent false alarms to *Nehemiah*, and the people that were with him, to terrifie and affright them: *Nehemiah* shewes the enemies design in it, vers. 9. *They all made us afraid, saying, their hands shall be weakened from the work that it be not done*; therefore in the close *Nehemiah* prays, *Lord strengthen mine hands* (it is this word) as if he had said, Lord, help me, put thine hands to mine. So (Isa. 35. 3. *Strengthen the weak hands*, put your hands to their hands, Psal. 73. 23. *David* acknowledging how he had almost fallen at the rising of the wicked, shews yet what kept him up, *Nevertheless, I am continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand*: the hand

had of providence is the power of God upholding our being, as the hand of Creation was the power of God giving us our being, *Iſa. 42. 6. I the Lord have called thee in righteouſneſs, and I will bold thine hand and help thee.* So, *Iſa. 41. 13.* that is, by holding of thine hand I will help thee. The ſame word in the original is uſed for hardening the heart (*Exod. 9. 12.*) becauſe hardneſs of heart ſtrengthens it to do evil. A hard heart is armed for any ſin.

דוק לב

So then we ſee, when the Lord refuseth to put forth his hand, or to take ſtrong hold (as the word imports) upon the hand of evil men, the meaning lies in one of theſe three things,

1. That he bears no favour to them, he doth not approve their cauſe or buſineſs.

2. That he gives them no aſſiſtance nor encouragement in their buſineſs.

3. That he will not deliver or reſcue them out of their diſtreſſes; when they are ſinking and falling he will not put forth his hand to hold them up, or to keep them from ſinking. God is not a Patron nor a Protector, an Adjutor or Aider of evil doers.

Evil doers.

We muſt not take theſe evil doers for all and every one that doth evil, for then whom would God help? We may then ſay (with reverence) God help us indeed; what a miſerable condition were we then in, if God would not put forth his hand to help any that do evil? The evil doer is a man notoriously, profeſſedly, ſtudiouſly wicked, one that acts and deviſes evil againſt God and his wayes. Every one who doth evil is not to be reckon'd an evil doer. A man doth evil in any one act: but one act doth not make him an evil doer. A Magiſtrate muſt count him an evil doer, who doth evil; and therefore he muſt take vengeance (in many caſes) of him that doth evil (though but once) *Rom. 13. 4.* and though he repent. The Angels were caſt as evil doers for one act, and ſo was man in innocency; but now the evil doer is one who multiplies and continues in evil deeds; to ſuch as theſe the Lord will not put forth his hand, or give them his help. Obſerve then,

ממע

First, That God is no friend, no aſſiſtant unto men in ſinful wayes.

He will not ſtrengthen the hands, or help forward the work of wicked men. God is the puniſher and judge of evil doers, therefore not their helper.

Evil

Evil doers oppose not only Gods law, but his nature, therefore he will not help them. He cannot exercise one Attribute against another; his power will not work against his holiness, or against his will.

There is a two-fold help which God giveth.

First, A common help.

Secondly, A special help.

We grant that God strengthens the hands even of evil doers in regard of a common help: For no man could put forth his hand to any evil, as a sinner, if God did not give him a general assistance, as a creature. In this sense the strength by which men rebel and sin against God, comes from God. But he doth not strengthen their hands, or give them help by any special assistance. In the doing of good, we have a common assistance to the act, as there is a natural motion in it, which God gives his people with the rest of the world: but this will not carry them out to do good compleatly. To bring forth any gracious act, they must have a special assistance. Hence Christ saith, *Without me ye can do nothing*, he means it not of that general support which Christ gives to man, by which *all live and move, and have their being in him* (in that sense no man is able to do any thing without Christ, for in him all things consist) but when he saith, *without me ye can do nothing*, he means, without my special assistance and strength ye cannot perform holy and spiritual duties, acceptable unto God. So the Apostle, *We have no sufficiency of our selves, so much as to think a good thought*. We have no sufficiency to think any thought without some assistance; but to think a good thought, we have not any sufficiency without a special assistance. Wicked men are not able to do evil without a common assistance; but they have no special assistance from God to do evil. He doth neither stir up and excite their lusts to the act, nor supply their lusts while they are acting. Wicked men have assistance enough in both from their own hearts, and from Satan. Though man hath no sufficiency in himself to think one good thought, yet he hath a sufficiency in himself to think all evil thoughts; as he is a creature he acts, and as he is a corrupt creature he sins. Man hath full power and free-will to do evil, therefore the Lord doth not put forth his hand to help the evil doer.

But it will be necessary for the understanding of this and other like Scriptures, to consider somewhat more distinctly, what God doth in reference to evil acts, or the acts of evil doers. He concurs,

curs, but not with such a concurrence, as amounts to the helping of evil doers, or the strengthening of their hands.

The first help which God gives evil doers, is privative, or negative; the calling in, or not giving out of that power, by which they might do good or avoid evil. Thus he departed from *Saul*, & then *Saul* went on, worse and worse, against *David*. God hath somewhat to doe with evil doers, when he with-draws that help from them, by which they might be kept from doing evil: Or, when he doth not assist them against the evil of their own hearts, and the pollutions of the world. This deserting and leaving them unto themselves, layes them open to sin. Yet the sin which a man thus deserted commits, can no more be charged upon God, then the darkness of the night can be charged upon the Sun for going down; sin follows divine desertion, not as an effect doth the cause, but as a consequent doth it's antecedent.

Secondly, He delivers or gives them up, first, to Satan: And secondly, to their own counsels, to a reprobate minde and vile affections, *Psal. 31. 12. Rom. 1. 24, 26*. This tradition is an act beyond desertion; there is a greater spiritual judgement in it, when God makes a mans own wickedness active against him, then when he doth not make his Spirit or grace active in him. It were better to be put into the hands of all the tyrants in the world, yea, better be put into the hands of the devil, then into the hands of our own lusts and passions. *God doth not give a reprobate minde or vile affections, but he gives up to them.*

Thirdly, Evil doers in their doing evil are ordered by God. Wicked men (in every sinfull act) run beyond the line of obedience, but they cannot run beyond the line of providence. God limits and circumscribes the acts of wicked men, for otherwise every wicked man would be a monster, a none-such in wickedness, if he could; every one would be a *Cain*, an *Ahab*, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*, &c. The sinfulness of men would be, not only out of measure sinfull intensive, in regard of the quality of it, but out of measure sinfull extensive, in regard of the quantity of it, it would break all bounds, carry all down before it, did not the Lord order and direct the disorders and confusions of it. There is a sea of wickedness in the heart of a wicked man, which is as boysterous and unruly as the natural sea; and if the Lord did not set bounds to that sea of wickedness, and say, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further*, it would overwhelm all. Thus far also God hath to doe in the

sinfulness of men, to limit and stay them, to restrain and keep them in compass while they sin. Every sin goes without the compass of that law which God hath given, but no sin can get beyond the compass of that leave which God gives.

Fourthly, We may say, *God assists the motions of sin, but not the motions to sin, or the sinfulness of the motion.* The strength of a wicked mans hand, while he sins, is from the Lord, but the Lord doth not strengthen his hand to sin. A sinner hath naturall help from God, but he hath no morall help from God; he hath all that from himself, from his own wicked heart, or from Satan. To eat was a naturall act in our first parents, this was from God: but to eat against the command was a morall act, and that was from man and the serpent. As suppose that a Musitian should touch or play upon a Lute that is out of tune, his touching the Lute is an artificial act, but the sounding of it comes from the nature of the instrument: the sounding of the instrument is from the hand of him that plaies upon it, but, that it sounds untuneably, is, because the instrument is out of tune. So the Lord by naturall assistance puts the hearts and hands of wicked men into motion, but that they move irregularly, that they make such harsh musick, that there is so much discord in their actions, that's from the disorder and untuneableness of their own spirits, not from the hand of God. They have not any morall assistance from God in sin, but a naturall only.

Or, take it negatively, *God doth not help the evil doers.*

First, He doth not help the evil doers, by instilling the least motion of evil into them. He casts in, or infuses holy thoughts and motions into the hearts of his own people, to prepare them for holy performances, but he never dropt the least motion of evil into the heart of man, to fit him for wickedness.

Secondly, The Lord doth not excite or stir up that naturall inherent corruption that is in wicked men; he doth not provoke or blow up their lusts. He excites the graces of his own people, when they are to doe any good: they have a principle of grace in them, and this God breaths upon, moving and acting it by fresh assistances. Neither of these wayes doth the Lord assist evil doers.

Further, Taking the words (as they must) in a figure, when it is said, *God doth not help the evil doers*; the meaning is, he doth oppose and resist them. Hence observe,

Wicked men are resisted and opposed by God in their evil doings.

God

God is ſo far from giving them any help, that he ſets himſelf againſt them. Underſtand this with a diſtinction.

There is a two-fold reſiſtance or oppoſition that God makes againſt the evil doings of men. There is,

1. A morall } oppoſition.
2. A naturall }

Or there is,

1. A declarative } reſiſtance.
2. An operative }

When it is ſaid, that God doth reſiſt (as this phraſe imports or ſuppoſeth) wicked men in doing evil, we are to underſtand it, that he ever oppoſes them morally ; that is, he ever layes a moral impediment in their way, and he ever oppoſes them declaratively, he declares his oppoſition in his Word. He never ſhews the leaſt liking of wicked men in their wayes. For when he ſaith, *He that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill; and he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill,* (Rev. 22. 11.) he doth not at all approve, but threatens theſe finners. This ſeeming admiſſion is the higheſt rebuke of ſin. But take it for a naturall oppoſition, which is the bringing out of ſtrength and power to ſtop men in the wayes of ſin: Thus the Lord doth not alwayes reſiſt evil doers. For if he did, it were impoſſible that any wicked man ſhould move one hairs bredth in doing evil; if God would put forth his power againſt man, he could not ſtir to ſin againſt God : but God doth not ſo, neither is he bound to lay a naturall impediment in the wayes of wicked men. It is enough to acquit him in his holineſs, that he ever layes a morall impediment in their way. He declareth his law againſt, and his diſlike of their ſins : and in this ſenſe he alwayes reſiſts them. All the ſin of man is againſt the will of God, yet no man ſins whether God will or no. The declarative will of God is often reſiſted, but his operative will cannot be reſiſted. As (which may illuſtrate this) in the civil State, the laws of this Kingdome lay a moral impediment in the way of thievery and robbery, &c. It is perpetually declared by the law, that no man ought to take another mans eſtate from him violently ; but yet the Kingdome doth not ever ſet a natural impediment againſt robbers, &c. That is, we doe not place a power of men to guard all high wayes or houſes, to ſee that no paſſenger ſhall be robbed, or houſe broken open : So the Lord layes a moral impediment in the way of wicked men alwayes, but he doth not alwayes ſet his power againſt them, whereby he is able

(if he please) to disable wicked men from doing evil. Thirdly, Observe,

When wicked men are going down, down they shall.

Why? God will not put forth his hand to help them; they whom God will not assist or help, cannot stand long. They in the Psalm thought they had got a godly man at an advantage, *Come (say they) let us persecute and take him, for God hath forsaken him, and there is none to deliver him;* Now we have our wills of this man, for God stands by and doth not own him. If God be a neuter, his friends cannot stand long, how then shall his enemies stand, when he is their opposer? We may conclude against wicked men, that they shall be destroyed, for God hath forsaken them, he will not own them; and as *Hamans* wife told him sadly, *Est. 6. 13. If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt surely fall before him.* When a man is going down, nothing can stay him, if God doe not: his hand must support a sinking and tottering person or Nation, or else either falls. When wicked enemies begin to fall, they shall fall and perish, for God will not put forth his hand to help the evil doers.

Now follows the effect of all. The effect first of Gods gracious helping of the righteous, *He will not cast away the righteous man;* and is that all? Shall a righteous man be only not rejected? As mans duty ought not, so the mercy of God doth not stay in negatives. The Lord hath positive blessings in store for his people; the latter part of the promise affirms this, *He will not cast away the righteous man.*

Verse 21. *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoicing.*

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.] And is it but just till then? Will the Lord when he hath set his people alauding, leave them and help them no more? Will he, when he hath given them cause of joy, cast them off? His people had better never laugh at all, then laugh upon these terms. No man can laugh long, nor at all, (upon any due ground) if God leave him.

Particula, *do-*
nec, non signi-
cat postea pro-
jiciendum esse
Deo simplicem,
sed quod immu-
tabiliter serva-
bitur à Deo.

We are not to understand this [*Till*] to be a *terminative*, or a *determinative* particule, as if the Lords care and favour towards his people, should be only till he put them in a good estate, and then they must shift for themselves. God puts no such limits to his love. *It cannot so much comfort the soul to know God loves us now, as it would*

would trouble the ſoul, to think a time may come when he will not love us. The [till] here notes a continued act; it is as much as to ſay, He will never caſt them off. The word [untill] both in the Hebrew and Greek, often notes everlaſtingneſs. God makes a promiſe to Jacob in this form, (Gen. 28. 19.) I will not leave thee, untill I have done that which I have ſpoken to thee of. And would he leave him then? No, the meaning is, I will never leave thee (Pſa. 110. 1.) Sit thou on my right hand untill I make my enemies thy footſtool. Chriſt ſhall not be put from the right hand of God when his enemies are ſubdued under his feet, Chriſt ſhall ſit there for ever.

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.

Thy mouth.] Obſerve here the change of the perſon : he ſpake before in the third perſon, *The Lord will not caſt away the perfect man*, now he brings it home and applies it unto *Job*, *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing*; as if he had ſaid, That which I ſpake in the third perſon, I meant it as appliable unto thy ſelf, that general truth may be made good to thy perſon, *Till he fill thy mouth*. I doe not ſpeak ſpeculations or fleeing notions of things that ſhall never come to paſs; If thou follow my counſell, thy own experience will quickly teach thee, *That God will not caſt thee off, till he fill thy mouth with laughing.*

Hoc quod dixi in tantum verum eſt, ut in te ſentieris.
Aquino.

Laughter is an act of joy flowing from reaſon. To fill the mouth with laughing notes great joy, ſuch an income of joy, ſo much matter of joy, that the heart cannot hold it, but out it muſt at the mouth : joy begins at the heart, there's the ſeat of it : and when the heart is ſo full of it that it cannot hold, then it runs over at the mouth and lips; that is, we expreſſe inward joy of the heart by ſome outward ſign or token, ſpeech or geſture. So then, to ſay, *I will not caſt thee away, til I have filled thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing*, is as much as to ſay, I will not leave thee, till thou haſt more comfort then thine heart can hold, ſo much, that thou muſt give it vent at thy lips, and be ſpeaking of it.

Os impleri dicitur riſu, cum aliquis tanta animi hilaritate perfruitur, ut illa cordis hilaritas per vociferationem conclamationem riſum aut hujusmodi exteriora ſigna valde appareat. Bold.

The word for *laughter* ſignifies as well inward as outward joy, heart-laughter as well as face-laughter. Beſides, there is a two-fold laughter.

First, a laughing for joy. And

Secondly, A laughing of ſcorn, called *ſubſannation*. With both theſe laughs the Lord will fill the mouths of his people.

First, With laughing for joy : for at their own comfortable

and good estate, for joy that the Lord hath glorified himself in their deliverance. These things are great matter of joy to them. And then he will fill their mouths with a laughing of derision, they shall scorne their enemies who have scorned at them. God laughs at the proud opposers of his truth and people, Psa. 2. *He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.* When the Lord hath confounded the plots of his enemies, he laugheth at them; his people also shall laugh, not insulting in the sins and miseries of men, but in the vengeance and disappointments which God poureth upon them. *The derisions and scornings of the Saints have more boliness in them, then the devotions and prayers of wicked men.* The word in the Next clause is considerable.

And thy lips with rejoycing.

אֶל־רֹאשׁוֹ

וּלְרֵגְלֵי

Perforavit, exciseratque est, et omnem magnam edidit.

אלאליזעוּם est letum clamorem tollere, ut solent homines fiducia praediti et spe erecti, ut milites ante praelium. Latini Barritum vocant, clamorem quem Barritum vocant, non prius debet attolli quam acies et agmina junxerit. Veget.

We translate *rejoycing*, but the word properly signifies a *joyfull sound*. So it is used (Psal. 89. 15.) *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.* And it signifies to make a joyfull sound, either with the mouth, which is a natural instrument, or with a trumpet or any other artificial instrument. *Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound*, that live within the sound of the silver trumpet which congregated the people of God, and gave notice of their solemn meetings for publick worship. This word is applied sometimes to that rude sound, or confused noise, which souldiers make when they come on to charge in battell; they commonly make a great clamour, to strike the adversary with terrour and amazement, and to encourage and raise their own spirits. The Greeks and Latins have their speciall terms to express it by, noted by the learned in the proprieties of those languages.

Again, That word is used for the confused noise of worsted or conquer'd enemies, when they flee and run away. So (Judg. 7. 31.) when *Gideon* had discomfited the host of the *Amalekites*, all the host ran and cryed, they made a dolefull sound: so the word beares, as well as a joyfull sound.

Thirdly, The word is chiefly used to note the sound or acclamation of souldiers after victory is obtained; a prevailing army shouts when the adverse forces are routed and overcome. Thus, in that famous instance (Josh. 6. 5.) *Joshua* gives command, that when they make a long blast with the rams horns, and when they heard the sound of the trumpet, all the people should shout with a great shout. Which shout is expressed by the word of the text, and in the tenth

verse

verse he charges that they should not shout or make a noise with their voice till the seventh day, because that was designed for the day of victory, the day when the wall should fall: *You shall not shout nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouths, till the day I bid you shout, then shall ye shout.* Balaam (Numb. 23. 21.) confesses he could not curse Israel, because *the shout of a King was amongst them.* It is this word. That shout of a King may be understood three ways.

First, That it was a shout as Kings used to have in their reception and coronation; Such a shout, saith he, there is among this people, as if a King were to be received and crowned. Thus when Samuel brought Saul out, whom he had annointed for King and said, *See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the King,* 1 Sam. 10. 24.

Or secondly, It noteth such a shout as is in an army, where a King in person is a leader or victour.

Thirdly, The shout of a King is amongst them, because the voice of a King should be as the sound of a Trumpet, or some loud instrument, to inform and direct his people, as also to encourage them.

From all, we see this rejoycing is no ordinary joy; it is a high, a triumphant joy, *I will fill thy lips with rejoycing, till thou shalt sing VICTORIA over all thine enemies and calamities.*

Further, This also is in it, a rejoycing with praise: not a bare rejoycing in the blessings and deliverances, but a rejoycing in the praises of God, who hath given those blessings, and wrought those deliverances. The Septuagint translate it by rendring of thanks, or a confession of praise, *I will not cast thee away, till I have filled thy lips with rejoycing*; that is, with my praises. Thus David prays (Psal. 71. 8.) *Let my mouth be filled with thy praise, and with thine honour all the day long.* Praise filling the heart fills the mouth; joy as well as sorrow pent up, stifles the Spirit. Hence we may observe, ἡ ἑομολογία
αὐτοῦ,
i.e. confessio
laudem & gra-
tia um actionis
pro accepta re-
stitutione: felici-
tate.

First, *That as joy is the portion of the people of God, so in good time they shall receive their portion.*

He will not cast off a perfect man, till he fill his mouth with joy, and his lips with rejoycing. Joy is their due, and joy they shall have. Hereafter they shall have their Masters joy, Enter into your Masters joy, will Christ say at last. Now they shall have such a joy as befits them, whilst they are in their Masters service. And as rejoycing is the portion, so the proper portion, the peculiar of godly men.

*Tibi videt &
mihi, non sibi.*

men. Though laughing, as it is a natural act, is common to all men, yet in the sense we speak of, laughter is appropriated unto godly and perfect men: *They only can laugh indeed, who have mourned indeed.* A wicked man doth but feign a laugh. *He laughs to thee and to me, but he doth not laugh to himself:* He hath no true laughter, while he laughs. His laughter is madness, and proceeds from his ignorance, not from his reason. Besides other marks of difference which shall be put between the servants of God and their enemies, this is one, *My servants shall rejoyce, and ye shall be ashamed* (Isa. 65. 13.) This joy arises two wayes.

First, From the greatness of the blessing, which they receive for themselves. We must rejoyce in the least mercy, how greatly then in the greatest? Our joyes take their measure by our mercies. VVhen Sarah had a Son, she said, *God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear me shall laugh with me*, Gen. 21. 6. Her mercy in receiving a son was so great, that it would serve a whole world to make merry with. The man that had found his lost sheep, *laid it on his shoulders, rejoycing*, (it was a pleasant burden to him) *and when he came home, he called together his friends and neighbours, saying, Rejoyce with me* (Luk. 15. 6.) As some afflictions are so big, that all our own sorrows are not large enough to weep and mourn over them: so some blessings are so big, that they call out more then our own affections to rejoyce over them.

Secondly, This overflowing joy arises from the greatness of those judgments, which are poured out upon the enemies of the Saints. The overthrow of Pharaoh at the red sea, of Sabin, and Sisera at the brook Kishon, filled all hearts and mouths with laughter, and so shall the overthrow of Babylon, Rev. 15.

Thus, when God doth great things for his people, and great things against his enemies, then it is time to rejoyce greatly (Psal. 126. 1.) *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce*, say the captive Jewes in the morning or first dawns of their deliverance from Babylon: and more then so, *Then was our mouth fill'd with laughter, and our tongue with singing.* And there is cause of great rejoycing in those great things, because then God fulfils his promises, & makes his Name glorious in his providences. Then God is greatly honoured, when his people are greatly delivered; then the blasphemies of wicked men are unanswerably confuted, and their mouths for ever stopped. From all these considerations the hearts of the Saints are filled with laughter, and their mouths with rejoycing,

rejoycing in a day when God works great things. At such times joy, and this degree of it, is not only our priviledge, but our duty. When we carry a message of thanks to God, we must not come with uncheerful countenances, or fowr faces. It is a comely thing, when our affections keep time and proportion with the dispensations of God. When we cannot sing the songs of *Sion*, or use our harps by the waters of *Babylon*, and when we cannot but sing either in the restoring of *Sion*, or in the ruines of *Babylon*.

Some may object those texts, *Woe to them that laugh, &c.* (*Lu* 6. 25.) It seems laughter is the portion of wicked men, for woe (we are sure) is their portion. It's true, worldly laughter, a laughter in corn and wine, and oyl, a laughter in riches, and honours, and carnal pleasures, as such, is a laughter with a woe annexed. But to laugh in the sense of the goodness of God, giving us outward good things to express our selves joyfully, when God expresses himself graciously, is not only comely, but holy. When Gods heart comes out at his hand, and is seen in his actions, our hearts should come out at our mouths, and be heard in our exultations.

Thus we have seen the effect of the goodness of God upon his own people. See the effects of his justice upon wicked men.

Verse 22. *They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.*

God resists, or will not put forth his hand to evil doers, then follows, *They shall be brought to shame*. Shame is opposite to laughing: he that rejoyceth, usually holds up his head, and cares not who sees him; but he that is ashamed, holds down his head, and endures not to be seen. Some men laugh in their sleeves (as we say) but all men would be ashamed in their sleeves.

They that hate thee.

The word hath a double signification.

First, It imports the putting forth of bitter hatred, when a man sets himself maliciously against his brother.

Secondly, It is taken comparatively, for a lesser or more remiss putting forth of love. He may be said to hate who wants a due heat and height of love. In that sense *Jacob* was taxed for hating *Leah*, *Gen.* 29. 31. *When the Lord saw that Leah was hated, &c.* Take hatred in the common notion, and then surely *Jacob* was not

Odio habuit,
contempsit. Di-
citur etiam ali-
quando per com-
parationem al-
terius, quod ma-
gis amatur, non
quod proprie o-
dio habetur.
Rab.

a Dav. in l. Rod.

a man so forgetful of a husbands duty, as to hate his wife : the meaning then is only this, *The Lord saw that Leah had a less portion of love then Rachel had, or less then her conjugal relation called for. Jacob did not love her with that strength of affection with which he loved Rachel. Which exposition is clear vers. 30.) and he (namely Jacob) loved Rachel more then Leah; then, Leah was loved, yet Jacobs loving of Rachel more then Leah, is called, hating of Leah. Not to love another in that degree we ought, is a degree of hatred. And in this sense we may take it here; for though such as maliciously, and professedly set themselves against the righteous are chiefly intended and fitted for this vesture of shame; yet it is cut out also for them, who do not love and esteem the righteous, who do not prize and rejoyce in them, as the beauty and dignity which Christ hath put upon them, invites them to do. These haters shall be clothed with shame; according to the degree of their hatred shall be the degree of their shame.*

They shall be clothed with shame.

בִּשְׁמָה
Aradice
 בִּשְׁמָה
*Pudor aliquem
 rei vel facti.*
 Our English
 word *abash* is
 as near it in
 sound as in
 sense.

To be ashamed at all is a great punishment; what is it then to be clothed with shame? To be clothed with shame is a great punishment, and most proper for those who are proud of their cloathing.

Shame is the fruit of sin. When there was no sin in the world, there was no shame in the world; *The man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.* Innocency knew no shame, and glory shall know none. It is good to be ashamed when we have done evil, but it is best to do no evil, whereof to be ashamed. *Shame is a perturbation or trouble of mind, expressed outwardly by holding down the head, or by blushing in the face.* And it ariseth three ways.

1. From doing somewhat against common light : though every act of evil hath matter of shame in it, yet a man is not naturally ashamed of it, unless it be done against the light of nature. Not to be ashamed of such sins, is to put out the light of nature : Such men are grown down into beasts. The impudence of *Jerusalem* is set forth in sinning against the light of Scripture without blushing, *Isa. 3. 9. Were they at all ashamed?* Some are so modest, that they are ashamed to hear of, much more to be praised for the good which they have done : Others are so impudent, that they are not ashamed to hear of, no, nor to be reproved for, the evil which they have

have done, *Were they at all ashamed?* As if he had said, what a boldness or impudence is this people come to, they are not ashamed of those things which are clearly forbidden in the Word. *A good man is ashamed of any thing he hath done against the light of Scripture. Every man is ashamed of what he doth against the light of nature.*

2. Shame arises from long delay, or detainments much beyond expectation. When *Moses* staid long in the Mount, *the people were ashamed* (Exod. 32. 1.) So *Judg.* 3. 25. when *Eglon* staid long in the inner parlour, the text saith, his servants, who waited without, were ashamed.

3. Shame riseth from utter disappointments. If hope deferred causeth shame, then much more hope destroyed. When a man sees his hopes quite cut off, so that he can no way reach the thing he looked for, shame takes hold of him strongly. *David* prays (Psal. 119. 116.) *Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope*; that is, let me not lose my hope, for then I shall be ashamed; my enemies will rejoyce and hoot at me, where's the word upon which you trusted to be upholden? Read *Isa.* 19. 9. *Psal.* 27. 6. *Psal.* 119. 116. In all which Scriptures we find shame following the total frustration and disappointment of hope.

Evil doers shall be ashamed upon these three grounds. They have done things against common light. They shall stay waiting and gaping long for what they desire. They shall see themselves totally disappointed and defeated in their desires; hence shame shall fill their faces, and they shall be covered with it as with a garment.

Here is more then bare shame waiting upon them, the text saith, *They shall be cloathed with shame.* To be cloathed is applyed both to ornament and dishonour. There are three degrees of expression in Scripture about shame.

1. Barely to be *ashamed*, that's the lowest.

2. To have the face covered with shame; *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake. Because for thy sake I have born reproach, shame hath covered my face* (Psal. 69. 6, 7.)

The Prophet complains, that his face was covered with shame; his enemies endeavoured to blot and asperse him, they poured contempt and reproaches upon his face, that is, upon his reputation in the world (to do so is to cover the face with shame) there-

fore he prayes, *Let not those that wait on thee be confounded for my sake.* Lord, they have covered me with shame, but do thou vindicate my reputation and mine honour; let not them that wait on thee be ashamed for my sake, because I have had shame upon me for thy sake: that is, let not any be discouraged in thy service, through my sufferings. The Apostle feared some would faint, because of his tribulations, *Eph. 3. 13.*

*Endui confusio-
ne est Hebrais-
mus, quo expri-
mitur omnimoda
conjunctio ve-
recundia. Bold.
Vestimenta di-
cuntur abomi-
nari, quasi ma-
culam contra-
here nimmer.*

3. *To be cloathed with shame*, which implyes the whole man under a covering of disgrace. Some are so cloathed with sin, that their very cloaths are ashamed of them, being unwilling to touch or hide such sins. *Job* speaks that sense in the ninth Chapter (*verse 31.*) concerning his own righteousness in justification, *If I wash my self with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me; that is, if I should set my self up in my own righteousness, my own cloaths would be loth to cover such a piece of spiritual pride, as that act would witness me to be.*

To be cloathed with shame notes four things.

*Manifeste con-
fundemur. Aqu.*

First, The extent or abundance of it. *To be cloathed with honour*, is to have much honour. *To be cloathed with humility*, is to be very humble (*1 Pet. 5. 5.*) He that is cloathed is covered all over with his cloathing.

*Est quasi præ-
mium peccati,
mercedis enim
nomine Syno-
nes olim daban-
tur.*

Secondly, The publickness of it, that shame cannot be hid. A man cannot go abroad but his cloathing is seen: the filthiness which lies underneath may be hid, but his cloathing cannot. Their shame shall cloath them; they shall not put their shame under their cloaths, their shame shall be in sight.

*Natura pudore
tota sanguinem
ante se pro ve-
lamento diffun-
dit & obtegit.
Max. l. 7. c. 11.*

Thirdly, They shall be cloathed with shame, may be understood thus, *shame shall be their reward.* They have been doing the business of Satan, he sets them a work, now see what livery they shall have at last, into what sute the devil will put them: They shall go in a livery of dishonour. Servants are cloathed by their Masters; Satan cloaths his servants, and this is their cloathing, they shall be cloathed with shame. *Sampson* was to give thirty change of garments to the *Philistines* for a reward, if they could declare his riddle (*Judg. 14. 12.*) Satan gives liveries and garments of shame to those who study out his riddles, and do his drudgery.

Fourthly, If we take the letter of the Hebraisme, *to be cloathed with shame* implyes thus much, that when a man hath done a thing of which he is ashamed, he (as it were) sends forth blood into the

the face, in a blush, to cover that foul act, he puts out a red garment, or a scarlet vail to hide his filthiness. Thus he is cloathed with shame. Modesty commands nature, and (where it is but honestly natur'd) prevails with it to cast this covering over all uncomeliness in speech or practise; and though this blush appears only in the face, yet the whole body is dipt & died with the same colour.

Hence also they who are ashamed, either hold their hands before their faces to cover them, or hold their heads down that they may not be discovered. Observe,

That which evill men glory in, will be matter of their abasement.

The Apostle saith, *They glory in their shame* (Phil. 3. 19.) not formally, but materially. No man can glory in any thing under the notion of shame, but many glory in that which is in it self shamefull, and will be their shame. The Hebrew expresses an Idol, by a word that signifies shame, or a shamefull thing (and it is the root of that in the text) because Idols, first, or last, make their worshippers ashamed, *Jer. 11. 13. According to the number of thy Cities were thy gods, O Judah, ye have set up altars to that shameful thing.* Idolaters shall see at last how foolish they have been in worshipping a stock or a stone, in adoring the inventions of their own brains, which can do them no good in an evil day: every Idol is a shameful thing, because it deceiveth it's worshippers: so every sinful act will be like an Idol, matter of shame, because every sin is a deceit, *Isa. 26. They shall be ashamed for their envy at my people:* They shall see their envy against the people of God was unreasonable, groundless and fruitless, therefore they shall be ashamed; and if they shall be ashamed of their envy against the people of God, how shall they be ashamed of their opposition and injuries, of their oppression and injustice, *Isa. 41. 11. Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed.* The Churches enemies glory in their own shame, and the Church shall glory in the shame of her enemies; therefore she is called to behold it, as a piece of her glory.

Observe further, *They that hate thee shall be cloathed wth shame,* then, *wicked men are haters of the righteous.* They are haters of God, therefore they must be haters of those who have the Image of God upon them. As he that loves, so he that hates him that begets, hates him also that is begotten. Natural men are such haters of holiness, that they hate that which is but the Image, the Idol of holiness, *hypocrisie*; they cannot endure a man, who doth but seem religious. It is said of the *Panther*, that he bears such hatred against man, that

Solent qui erubescunt manum faciei, quia opprobrium ac dedecus timent ad-movere. Bold

Idolum cujus pudet cultorem, post quam ab eo in periculis constitutus, nec adiutus fuerit.

that if he see but the picture of a man, he will tear it to pieces. Many men have such an hatred against true, real goodness, that they cannot abide the shadow or appearance of it.

And the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

Olim in tento-
r. is habitant,
unde factum ut
t. entium pro
qualibet domo
accipitur.
Per domum in-
nuit familiam
totam cum om-
ni rebus do-
mesticis Drus.
וְיָבִיטָהּ

וְיָבִיטָהּ
ad verbum, non
ipsum, sub-
intelligitur est,
vel erit.

We have met many passages to this purpose. *Dwelling place* in the Hebrew is a tabernacle, because they were wont to dwell in tabernacles. And when he saith, *His tabernacle shall be brought to nought*, The meaning is, *His whole estate shall be brought to nought*; not only the walls of his house shall be overthrown, but all his goods, his riches, his honours, his titles, his children, his relations, whatsoever is dear to him shall be *brought to nought*; the Hebrew is, *it shall not be*; it shall be, as if such a thing had never been in the world. God will at last make an utter *consumption* of wicked men. None who have tabernacles in the world, shall long have a tabernacle in the world. But the fall of these mens tabernacles shall not be according to the condition of mortality only. As *Moses* speaks of *Corah, Dathan, &c.* These men shall not die the common death of all men, a remarkable judgement shall overtake them. Some take *tabernacle*, to note their religious duties, their worship and service of God, and so their spiritual estate. Wicked men will serve God outwardly, they have their tabernacles as well as the Saints, they pray and hear, &c. But, be it a civil, or be it a religious tabernacle, down it must, all their riches and all their religion shall come to nought.

J O B, Chap. 9. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*Then Job answered and ſaid,
I know it is ſo of a truth: but how ſhould man be juſt with
God?
If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a
thouſand.
He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength: who hath har-
dened himſelf againſt him and hath prospered?*



IN the former Chapter Bildad gave a threefold ad-
vice to Job.

First, To think aright of the juſtice and judge-
ments of God.

Secondly, to humble himſelf and ſeek unto God.

Thirdly, (Which is implied in both the former)
to forbear complaining of his own troubled life, or

deſiring the end of it by death.

To theſe three heads of Bildads advice or reproof, Job ſhapes
his answer in this 9th, and in the 10th Chapter.

First, He opens his thoughts about, and highly magnifies the
juſtice of God, to the 21. verſe.

Secondly, He renounces his own righteouſneſs, and proves, that
no man is to be judged by the preſent dealings of God with him,
from the 21. verſe to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He renews and juſtifies his complaint againſt his
life, and his wiſhes for death, by many arguments, in the tenth
Chapter.

In moſt of theſe points he answers exactly, according to the
ſtrict laws and rules of diſputation.

First, Repeating his Opponents argument, and then yielding
what was true, denying what was falſe, and diſtinguiſhing about
what was doubtfull. Which he doth with ſo much acuteneſs and
vigour, with ſo much ſtrength and clearneſs both of reaſon and
judgement, that one of the Ancients cries out upon the whole
matter

Quantum ver. ba hec præ se
ferunt philoso-
phum, Chryf.

matter of his answer in these Chapters, O how much Philosophy (I may say, how much logick) hath Job shewed in this reply to the argument of Bildad!

Bildads argument speaks to this effect; God who hath punished thee is just, therefore thou art unjust. Job in answer grants the antecedent, but denies the consequent. His grant of the antecedent appears in the two first verses of the Chapter, *I know it is so of a truth* (I yield this) *but how should a man be just with God?* He proves and confirms that God is just, in the fourth verse, by a double medium.

First, From his wisdom, *He is wise in heart.* And

Secondly, From his power, *He is mighty in strength.* What force there is in these two Attributes to hold up the justice of God, we shall see afterwards.

The fourth verse is likewise a concession unto the second part of Bildads advice, namely, that Job should humble himself. As if Job had said, *You advise me to humble myself, and to seek unto God, it is most becoming I should do so, for, he is wise in heart, and mighty in strength; who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?* There is no standing out against God, and therefore I yield, I fall down and abase my self before him.

That God is thus powerful and wise, he goes on to prove in the following parts of the Chapter to the 22. verse, by the enumeration of many particular acts and effects, both of his power and wisdom.

The other part of his argument, namely, the consequent, that therefore Job was unjust and wicked, he denies, and more, refutes it strongly. His negation and refutation begin at the 22th verse. *This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the righteous and the wicked.* As if he had said, *This is no argument, that I am a wicked man, because God hath destroyed my estate, and my children; for God (in this sense) destroyeth both the righteous and the wicked. It cannot be proved that I am wicked, because God hath afflicted me; or that God hath afflicted me for my wickedness: I know another way how to acquit the justice of God, and to declare him righteous, though I do not joyn with you in condemning and judging my self (in your notion) unrighteous.*

This is the sum of his answer contained in the ninth Chapter.

In the tenth he renews his complaint, as before in the sixth, and sheweth (after he had given God glory under all his sufferings) what

what great reason he had to be ſenſible under the pain and ſmart of his ſufferings.

Verſe 1, 2. *Then Job answered and ſaid, I know it is ſo of a truth.*

Thus he grants the antecedent, *I know it to be ſo of a truth, or truly I know it to be ſo.* The word hath a double force in it. Sometime of a bare, yet a ſtrong aſſeveration, and ſometimes of an Oath. *I know it to be ſo of a truth, I affirm or aver the thing, or truly and indeed, or verily I know the thing to be ſo.* As if Job had ſaid, This is ſo much a truth, that I dare ſwear it is a truth, that God is juſt, I durſt take my oath of it, if I were called to it; I would ſwear for the juſtice of God, above all things in the world. *As we ought to ſwear in truth (Pſal. 89. 49.) ſo to affirme a thing to be ſo in truth, is ſwearing.*

DIAN
Aſſeveratio
quædam eſt
rei ſibi bene
exploratæ.
Radix Aman,
fidelem, ſtabi-
lem, veracem
eſſe, unde
Amen.

Further, the word is taken either in way of affirmation, or in way of confirmation. In way of affirmation, it refers to that which is to be ſpoken; ſo frequently in the new Teſtament, *Amen, Amen, verily, verily,* is a vehement affirmation of what was afterwards to be ſpoken, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you.* But here rather it is a note of confirmation of the truth already ſpoken; The Syriack of the new Teſtament uſe it commonly for an affirmation; the Hebrew in the old, for a confirmation.

Amen dupli-
cem habet ſen-
ſum, 1. Ut ſit
affirmatio eo-
rum quæ dictu-
ri ſunt. 2. Ut
ſit confirmatio
eorum quæ
jam dicta ſunt.
Hebraicè inno-
tare ſolet con-
firmationem.
Syriacè in
N. T. affirma-
tionem. Bol.

So then, it is here a ſealing to the former truth delivered, both by Bildad, and Eliphaz, about the juſtice of God; Eliphaz in the 4th Chapter, verſ. 17. and Bildad in the 8th. verſ. 3. *Doth the Almighty pervert judgment? No (ſaith Job) I know it of a truth, that he doth not.* And ſo the ſenſe runs thus.

Bildad, doſt thou ſurmize, by what I have ſpoken, that I have ill or hard thoughts of the juſtice of God? Did I ever think that juſtice was perverted, becauſe I was afflicted? I acknowledge thou haſt truly ſaid, that God doth not pervert judgment; and I acknowledge thou haſt faithfully counſelled me to ſeek unto God, and make my ſupplication to the Almighty; for alas! who am I that I ſhould contend with God? What am I that I ſhould diſpute it out with him concerning my troubles and his dealings with me? Or if I ſhould be ſo raſh, ſo fool-hardy, and adventurous, to attempt ſuch a thing, alas! I could make nothing of it, I could not answer him one argument of a thouſand, whereby he might maintain his own juſtice, or to one charge and article of a thouſand, whereby he might impeach mine. I am no match for God. There- fore I yeild thee the whole matter, ſo far as concerns the honouring of

God in that great Attribute of his justice, and the duty of weak man in humbling himself before the great God. I know it to be so of a truth. Note hence,

First, That in all disputes and controversies it is a note both of an ingenuous and of an holy heart, to yeeld as much as without wrong to truth may be yeelded unto.

Jobus veritas
in fidissimus
fector, qui om-
nia ratione, non
afflictionis ser-
su metiretur;
tam ingenuè
fateretur &
commendat ve-
ra quæ ab im-
pugnatoribus
promuntur,
quam generosè
falsa depellit;
quod hoc præ-
sertim capite
liquidè demon-
strat, dum ve-
ram duorum
disputatorum
assertum, non
admittit modo,
verum elegan-
tissime & di-
fertissime inte-
gro serè capite
amplificat &
exornat.
Pined.

It is good to agree as far as we can, if we cannot agree in all. We should walk with an adversary one mile (when it lies in our way) though we cannot walk twain. As soon as Job hears a truth, he falleth down before it. He hath not a word to speak against the truth of God, though it come from erroneous men. He will be a friend to truth, though brought by them who seemed his enemies. If this law of disputation were well observed, many disputes would be sooner ended. As some out of love to men are apt to entertain their very errors; so some out of hatred to men reject their truths. Errors cannot be really adorned, nor truths soiled by those who hold them. Our judgment about both must be carried by reason, not swayed by affection. Willingly to embrace and receive a truth from those, whose errors we most zealously oppose, is the due temper of a champion for the truth.

Secondly, *I know it to be so of a truth*, saith Job, Observe, *A godly man is a knowing man.*

He is established in truths, especially in great and necessary truths, in the vitals and fundamentals of religion. Job had been long acquainted with this principle, that God is just, and that every man must abase himself before him, how just soever any man is. Light is the first thing which God makes in the new Creation of Grace, as it was in the old creation of nature: He casts in a beam, a ray into the soul, whereby we may discern of things that differ. There may be darkness in a godly man, but he dwells not in darkness: bring a truth to him, and as there is somewhat in his heart that answers and is a kin to it, so that apprehends and makes out his acquaintance with it, often at first sight, alwayes after consideration, unless he be under clouds and temptations. In those cases we may bring truths to holy men, which they doe not know to be so of a truth, yea, which they may refuse for errors. But usually a good man knows truth, having learnt it before, or as having a likeness to other truths he knew before.

Thirdly, *I know this to be so of a truth* (saith Job) In the midst of his pains, in the greatest troubles of his flesh, he forgets not to honour God.

Hence

Hence observe,

A gracious heart gives testimony to the righteousness of God, though severely chastened under the hand of God.

When God deals most hardly with the soul or with the body, or with soul and body, a holy heart hath not a hard thought of God, *I know it to be so of a truth*; He doth not only acknowledge that God was just, when he punished others, but when he afflicted him. The common argument which the friends of Job took up to prove God to be just, was this; God is righteous, for he deals with men according to their deserts: but Job argues thus, God is righteous, however he deals with men, and whatsoever those men are, let men be wicked or upright, holy or prophane. When we see God breaking the wicked, and making gall and wormwood, fire and brimstone the portion of their cup, this argues his Justice, because he hath threatned such with wrath and vengeance. But the Saints go further, they proceed upon purer and sublimer principles, maintaining that God is just, though he afflict the justest and holiest man upon the earth. The righteousness of God shines forth to them thorow the darkest sufferings of righteous men. The righteousness of God is not grounded upon the object about which he dealeth, whether righteous or unrighteous, but upon the act of his own will, yea upon the pleasure of his own will. His righteousness proceedeth from himself, and he is a righteous act, whatever the object be upon which he acts. We need not say, God is just, because he punisheth the guilty; for God is just, though he afflict the innocent. We may at once maintain our own innocency, and the justice of God, while we bleed under his hand, or smart under the severest scourges. *I know it to be so of a truth.*

But how shall man be just with God.

M. Broughton reads, *And how can man be just before the Omnipotent?* and so the sense runs more clear, taking the first particule for a pure copulative, whereas we read it as a *discretive*; but *how shall man be just before God?* Namely, in your sense; as if he had said, you discourse of Justice under such a notion as renders it impossible for any man to be just before God; in one sense a man may be righteous before God, but in yours no man can. Would you not have a man know himself to be just, unless he know himself to be without sin? If you take just, to be the same as with out indwelling sin, then it is impossible for any man to appear just before

*Illud cum Deo
vel ante Deum
erit aliquid fo-
rense & judi-
ciale.*

God : but man may be just and righteous before God, though he have sin dwelling in him, and that's my notion of justice in this dispute.

Justice is either inherent or imputed. By inherent justice no man is just before God : according to imputed justice, man may be just, and is before God. So these two propositions are reconciled, *No man is just before God : every believer is just before God.* Our translation using the discretive, *But,* seems to carry this intendment, that no man can be just before God by inherent justice, which the next verse implies, *For if he contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.*

The words taken in this sense are the same with the seventeenth verse of the fourth Chapter, *Shall mortall man be more just then God?* There Eliphaz speaks comparatively in a way of excess, *more just, or, just rather then God :* He cannot exceed God in any thing. Here Job speaks comparatively in a way of equality, *How should man be just with God?* He cannot compare with God at all. Yet the sense is the same, and the deniall of mans perfect inherent righteousness is the subject of both. A just man comparing with God, deprives himself of all his justice. He is not so much as man may be, by aspiring to be what God is. But I need not stay in any further clearing, how man is not just before God ; or in any observations from it, but shall refer the Reader back to the fourth Chapter.

Quisquis se auctore bonorum comparat, bono se quod accepit, privat, ea ipsa ratione, qua quis se componit Deo justus esse desinit, quamvis justus fuerit.
Greg.

Onely take this from it, *How shall man be just with God ? With God ;* that is, looking upon, or comparing himself unto God ; as if he had said, It will take down all the proud and high thoughts of man, in regard of his own justice and righteousness, if he will but cast his eye upon God, and duly consider how just and righteous God is. Hence observe,

The way for us to humble our selves for our own sinfullness, is to look up and to consider the purity and holiness of God.

If we set our selves before him, we shall see how vile and corrupt we are. His fulness will convince us abundantly of our emptiness, his purity will shew us our spots, and his all-sufficiency our nothingness. If we bring a course peice of cloth before a fine, we shall see what course stuff it is : if we lay a better in any kinde by a worse, the worse will appear worser then before. For the most part we who are course stuff our selves, compare our selves with those who are as course as our selves. While some men compare them-

themselves with men, they begin to think they are like God himself. A man looking upon his neighbour is just before him, or sees him no better then himself, of no purer thread, of no better die in his life then he; I have faults, and so have others; I have failings, & so have my neighbours; if you charge me with my sinnings, who is it that is without sin? As our usuall phrase is, *If the best mans faults were written in his fore-head, it would make him pull his hat over his eyes.* Thus usually men compare themselves with men; but if they would look up to God, O how would the thoughts of their hearts fall, and be abased before him. The Pharisee could pride himself in his comparisons with men (*Luk. 18.*) *God be thanked I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.* But Pharisee, art thou as God? pure, and holy, and just as he? *Look upwards, and pride will down.* The holy Apostle, (*2 Cor 10. 12.*) speaking of those false Apostles, saith, *They measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves amongst themselves, are not wise.* So we may say to men in generall, while ye take a scantling of your own wayes, by your own rules, and measure your selves by your selves, or while ye measure man by man, and compare creature with creature, ye are not wise; while we go this way to work pride will not down. Man hath some reason to say, I am as good as man, I have sinned, and so hath he, such a man hath as many sins as I. But if we look up to God, we shall quickly finde that he hath no sin at all in him, and that we have no goodness at all in us. The best of Saints must not only confesse, with Paul, *I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing,* (*Rom. 7. 18.*) but he must confesse also, *I know that in me, even in my spirit, dwells no good thing, in comparison of the goodness of God.* Though man in regeneration is made a partaker of the divine nature (*2 Pet. 1. 4.*) yet his nature cannot bear the perfections of the divine nature. *How shall man be just with God?*

Verse 3. *If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.*

This is a confirmation of the former grant. I (saith he) acknowledge no man can be just, by inherent righteousness before God, For, *If he would contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.*

If he would contend.

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Voluit, optavit.

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In foro & extra litigavit, disceptavit, causam egit, seu dixit etiam de verbalitatum contentione seu actione dicitur. Merc. Contentio hæc est rationibus, objectionibus, responsionibus, argumentationibus cum Deo agere. Pined. φιλονεικεῖν est cui victoria potior est veritate Est. in 1 Cor. 11. εἰ δὲ τίς δέκεῖ, non aliud est quam εἰ δὲ τίς δέκεῖ. Siquis sibi in eo placeat, quod contentiosus sit. Dan Heins.

The word, *If he would*, is, *If he have a minde, or delight to contend*, if any man takes pleasure in contending with God, he shall quickly (as we speak) have his hands full, and his belly full of it.

From this word the Church is called *Hephzibah*, that is, my pleasure is in her (*Isa. 64.2.*) And (*Psal. 16.3.*) *David* professes of the Saints (*Hephzibah*) my pleasure, or, my delight is in them. So here, if any one hath a pleasure, or a delight, or would take upon him to contend with God, or (as the word signifies) to chide, to argue, and plead with God. The word may be taken either for an angry chiding, or a rationall chiding, which is disputing. The place where the *Israelites* did contend or chide with *Moses*, is called *Meribah*, from this word, *Exod. 17.7.* And after *Gideon* had pul'd down *Baals* altar, a great controversie or contention, a pleading or arguing ensued, therefore he was called *Jerubbaal*, a contender or pleader with *Baal*, *Judg. 6.21.*

Now (saith *Job*) if a man take delight to contend, plead or argue with the Lord, What will be the issue of it? He is like to have a cold pull of it, *He cannot answer him one of a thousand*, poor creature! Before I open that, take this observation.

Man naturally loves to be contending.

Some cannot live but in this fire, and in troubled waters (*1 Cor. 11.16.*) *If any man seems to be contentious*, or as the Greek carries it, *a lover of victory*. Contentious spirits love victory more then truth, and to overcome more then to teach or be taught. Besides the verb, which we (in this text of the Apostle) translate *seems*, doth rather signifie, *is pleased to be, desires, or hath a will to contentious*, yea boasts and prides himself in it. So the word (*δοξάζει*) is used, *Mat. 3.9.* and *Gal. 6.3.* *If a man think himself to be something, &c.* That is, if he boast and take upon him, as if he were some great man. Thus some glory to be meddling and contending in all Questions. Yea, though it be upon as unequall termes, as *Jeboash* the King of *Israel*, by his parable, supposed *Amaziah* King of *Judah* would war with him (*2 King. 14.9.*) *The thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, &c.* Thistles will sometimes challenge Cedars, whom we may counsell, as he doth, *tarry at home, why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt?* It argues folly enough in any man to love contention with man, and pride enough to love contention with men above him. Then how mad are they both

both with folly and pride, who attempt to contend with God?
Whom, as it follows, *They cannot answer,*

One of a thousand.

A thousand is a great number, a full number, and therefore it is put for all great numbers. It is a leading number, therefore the word in the Hebrew for a thousand, cometh from the root which signifies to lead, and the *Noun*, a *Duke* or a *Captain*, who is a chief and a leader of men, *Gen. 36. The Dukes of Edom*, or the leaders of *Edom*: As also a master or teacher, because he goes afore, and is chief over those he instructs. And hence the number *thousand* in the Hebrew hath it's name, because a *thousand*, is (as it were) a prince among numbers, a chief number, a captain number; and is therefore put for all great numbers, or for the greatest numbers that can be imagined: to say, *one of a thousand*, is, as much as to say, *One amongst all*. *One* is not a number, it is but the seed, principle or beginning of number. A unity hath a feminall vertue in it; all numbers are made out of *ones*, but *one* it self is no number. So that to say, *One of a thousand*, is to put the greatest and the least number in opposition, it is as much as to say, a man cannot answer God in any thing that ever he did in the whole course of his life (*2 Pet. 3. 8.*) *One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*. When he saith, thousand years, he means all years, all time put together, it is but as one day to the Lord. A day was the first distinction of time; the first perfect time that was created, was a day: now put a thousand years together, it is but as one day to the Lord; *All times and one time are all one to him who inhabites eternity*. In *Psal. 90. 6.* it is, a thousand years are but as yesterday, which notes all time past, as *Peter* notes, all time to come, is, but as one day.

One of a thousand, referred to a person, notes choice, excellent man among all men (*Job 33. 23.*) *If there be an interpreter, one amongst a thousand*, one choice man amongst many, or amongst all. He that rightly expounds the text of a troubled conscience, and interprets the minde of God to such a soul, is a chief, the flower of a thousand, a man of men. Christ (*Cant. 5. 10.*) is called, *the chiefest of ten thousand*; the Hebrew is, a standard-bearer, such are choice men, elect of the multitude. Christ is the elect of all the multitudes in the whole world; bring all Armies of men together, or an Army of man-kinde, chose amongst them all, and you cannot
finde

שלל
Pedagogus,
dux quod alij
præire solet,
sicut Aleph
prima litera
reliquas omnes
præcedit,
hinc Eleph,
milles numero-
rum princeps.

Unitas huic
numero opposi-
ta, pro nihilo
habetur.

finde such another as Christ is, he is the choice of *ten thousand*, that is, the choice of *all the thousands* that are in the world.

He cannot answer him one of a thousand.

He cannot answer.] Some refer it only to the person. *He*, that is, one man of a thousand men, is not able to answer God.

Secondly, We may refer it to the matter, to the objections or charges, that shall be brought against him, he cannot answer to one thing of a thousand. So M. Broughton; as if he had said, *If God brings many charges*, or layes many articles against him, he is not able to satisfy God, or give a good account in one.

Uilem hominum
conditionem
judex contem-
net. Poly-
chron.
Tantum non est
homo, ut Deus
cum sua respon-
sione dignetur.
Vatabl.
illud non pote-
rit, idem erit
quod noler,
vel per tran-
spositionem
verborum,
poterit non
respondere.

Thirdly, Some refer it to God himself, *If he*, (that is, man) should contend with him, he would not answer him one of a thousand, that is, God would not answer him one of a thousand: as if he had said, the matters will be so trivial and so sleight, the charges that a man can bring against God, or the objections he can make will be so easie, that the Lord will not vouchsafe to answer one word of a thousand. Some men will plead priviledge to some charges, and all their answer shall be, they may chuse, or it is at their liberty whether they will answer or no. Here *he would not* (referred to God) is as much as he need not, he is no way obliged to answer, he may claim priviledge. Further, when arguments are poor and empty, a man will say in dispute, *These things are not worth answering*; or of a Book, there is not one page that is worth a confutation, it carries its own confutation. Such a sense may be made out here, God will not dishonour himself by contending with so weak an adversary as man, or by answering such simple arguments.

Rogatus homo
in iudicio di-
vino, basita-
lit, et stultit,
obmutescet.

But rather (as before) refer it to man, *He cannot answer him one of a thousand*; that is, if God come to question man, to lay such and such matters to his charge, or object against him; poor creature, he must shut his mouth, put up his books, he hath nothing to say, he must hide his face, for he cannot answer him one of a thousand. So in the 14th verse of this Chapter. *How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to plead with him?* Hence observe.

First, *That there is in man a spirit ready to contend against God himself.*

If he contend with him, or, if he plead with him, which supposes that

that there is such a principle of pride in the heart of man. The heart of man is very full of quarrels and contentions with man, but fuller of quarrels with God himself. The great controversie between God and man, is whose will shall stand, Gods will or mans. God directs man one way, and man contendeth he will go anotherway. There is a natural unanswerableness between the heart of man, and every thing that God doth or speaks; hence it is that man calls God to often to answer. There is a contention, first about that work of God, the foundation-stone of all the works of God, his decrees and counsels. While the Apostle (*Rom. 9. 20.*) stops such mouths, he shews how ready they are to open, *O man, Who art thou that repliest against God? Thou wilt say, wherefore doth he complain?* Thus man begins to contend. But, O man, who art thou, that thou shouldest dare reply upon God? Wilt thou be venturing to question the righteous God? Must he be accountable to thee for what he did before thou hadst a being?

Secondly, What contentions are there continually about the rules which God gives man to order his life by? Man thinks this is an unreasonable rule, that's a hard rule, and a third is an unprofitable rule; how many rise up against the Law, to which they should submit, and would shift off obedience to the rule, by complaints against it? *The carnall mind (or, the minding of the flesh) is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,* (*Rom. 8. 7.*) Words importing highest opposition, and that, irreconcilable. It is not, it cannot be subject; the mind is never subject to the Law, till it be changed into the Law. Christ saith, that one iota or tittle of the Law shall not pass, till all be fulfilled; it is as true, that not one iota or tittle of the Law can be fulfilled by us, till our carnal mindes pass away. *Paul* found just as much stubbornness and contrariety against the will of God remaining in him, as there was of a carnal mind remaining in him (*Rom. 7.*) As man desires not the knowledge of the will of God (*Job 21. 14.*) and secretly wishes that he were ignorant of what he knows, so he wisheth there were no such thing to be known; and that the revealed will of God were less by so much, as it specially opposeth his will.

Thirdly, the contest about providence grows as high in the hearts of men, as that about predestination to life, or the rule of life. The Saints sometimes (modestly) enter this controversie, *Let me plead with thee,* saith *Jeremiah*, Chap. 12. 1. *He doth it, we see,*

with a great deal of trembling and submission; he seems to ask leave before he doth it. Hypocrites contend with God proudly about their own good works, (*Isa. 58.3.*) *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou seest not?* As if they had done so well, that God himself could not mend it. Carnal men plead with God profanely about his works; as if he had done so ill, that they could mend it. *Ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal: hear now, O house of Israel, is not my way equal? Are not your wayes unequal?* *Ezek. 18.25.* They charged God with ill dealing, because he punished them, who did evil. *Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have transgressed against me, saith the Lord, (Jer. 2.29.)* they began to plead with God about his dispensations, as if he had been unrighteous or rigorous; *Wherefore will ye plead with me? I will plead with you, saith God, vers. 9.* God may plead and contend with man, but shall man plead and contend with God? *Ye have all sinned and transgressed against me; that's enough to stop your mouths; I can answer you with one word, Ye are a company of sinners,* then plead not with me, *Plead with your mother, plead,* *Hos. 2. 2.* let man plead with man, man with his neighbour. The wit of one man may compare with the wit of another, and their justice may hold plea with one another. But neither the justice, nor the wit of man will serve him to hold plea with God. That is a second observation,

Man is not able to maintain his cause, and hold plea, either against the works of God, or for his own.

If he dispute with God in the schooles, or see an advocate to implead him at the bar, he is not able to answer him one of a thousand (*Isa. 45.9.*) *Wo be to him that striveth with his maker;* it is this word, *Wo be to him that contendeth with his maker,* for he shall not be able to make out one argument, or prove any thing against him; such a man is in a very sad condition, wo unto him. *David* prays, *Pf. 143.2.* *Enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified;* as if he had said, Lord, if the holiest and purest, if the best of men should come and stand before thee in judgement, or plead with thee, they could not be justified: therefore *David* was so far from contending with God, that he deprecates God contending with him, enter not into judgement with thy servant: such a charge is laid upon *Job* (*Chap. 33.13.*) *Why dost thou strive with him? for he giveth not an account of any of his matters.* And if he should condescend to give an account, can any man gain by it? The Lord argues so convincingly, *That every mouth must*

must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God, Rom. 3. 19. Every mouth shall be stopped, when God opens his. When God speaks, man hath nothing to say against him, *Every mouth is stopped*, with this one word, *Man is a sinner*. The Apostle points at some (Tit. 1. 11.) *Whose mouths must be stopped*, he means, with reason to convince them that they are in an error. By this one argument, *That all men are sinners*, God stops their mouths for ever.

Thirdly, By way of corollary, we may give you that general truth.

That no man can be justified by his works.

If we contend with him, we cannot answer him one of a thousand. He that mixeth but one sin with a thousand good actions, cannot be justified by his works; how then shall he be justified by works, who hath not one perfectly good action amongst a thousand sins? Man is not able to answer for one thing he doth of a thousand, no not for one thing he doth of all that he hath done. He that would be justified by his works must not have one ill action amongst all his actions. One flie in the box of ointment corrupts all; one defect makes a sinner, but many good actions cannot make one righteous, *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart* (1 Joh. 3. 20.) Should man contend with his own heart, that will condemn him, his own heart would bring a thousand witnesses against him sooner then one for him. Conscience is a thousand witnesses; man cannot answer before that tribunal, how much less can he answer God, *Who is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things*! That's the argument Job goes on with, to prove that man cannot be justified before God.

Vers. 4. *He is wise in heart and mighty in strength, who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*

Which words are a further illustration both of the justice of God, and of mans duty to be humbled and abased before him.

He is wise in heart and mighty in strength.

Here is a double proof in these words.

A proof, first of Gods justice; why? *He is wise in heart*, therefore he knows how to do right: *He is mighty in strength* or power, therefore he needs not pervert judgment, or do wrong for fear of man.

Fear of a higher power usually biasseth those who are in power. Here are two Attributes which keep the ballances of divine judge-

*Integerrimus
judez cui nec
sapientia ad ju-
dicandum, nec
potentia ad ex-
equendum deest.*

ment in a due poise, *He is wise in heart and mighty in power*, therefore there is no turning of him out of the path of justice.

Secondly, It is a proof or a confirmation of the other point about which *Bildad* advise th *Job*, namely, that he ought to seek unto God, and humble himself before him. It would be dangerous to contend or contest with God. Why? *He is wise in heart and mighty in power*. As if he had said, Shall ignorant, foolish man contend with the wise God? shall weak man contend with the mighty God? Alas! man is no match for God, *He is wise in heart and mighty in strength*, who can enter such a controversie and prosper in it?

There are two wayes to carry on a controversie.

First, By wit and policy.

Secondly, By strength and power. If man will take up the former weapon against God, if he work by wit and dispute against God, God will be too hard for him; *For he is wise in heart*. If man will set his shoulders or take up weapons against God, poor creature, what can he do? *The Lord is mighty in strength*; from both we see there is no dealing with him.

*Dolus an virtus
quis in hoste
requirer?*

These two attributes render God at once the most dreadful adversary, and the most desireable friend. It is a hard choice whether to have wit or power in an enemy? And who would not have both wit and power in his friend? God is here represented under these two notions, both meet in him, either of which in an enemy render him dreadfull. Will any man enter the lists, or meddle with an adversary (who would not rather humble himself, and make him his friend?) *Who is wise in heart, and mighty in power*.

He is wise in heart.

*Humanitatis di-
sum, cor in He-
braeo sumitur
pro iudicio &
intellectuali
potentia, ita ho-
mo vel Deus
sapiens corde
dicitur, qui
præstat sapien-
tia. Pined.*

It is spoken after the manner of men; the heart naturally is a principall organ or part of the body, it is the seat of life, thither the spirits have their recourse, there they have one special seat of residence; the heart is chief in man. To say, *God is wise in heart*, is to say, *He is most wise*, because the heart is the seat of wisdom. As when we say of a man, he is holy in heart, or he is humble in heart, or upright in heart, or he obeys God from his heart, we report such a man for exceeding humble, holy, upright and obedient. So when God is said to be wise in heart, it imports that he hath infinite wisdom; his, is not only wisdom in the tongue, or some flashes of wit, but deep, solid, rooted wisdom: *He is wise, yea, he is wisdom*

dome at heart. A foolish man is without an heart. As an hypocrite hath two hearts, a double heart, an heart and an heart; so a foolish man hath never an heart. Hypocrites will be found at last to have no hearts, they are the greatest fooles of all. *Ephraim* (*Hos. 7. 11.*) is called, *a silly Dove without heart*. Silliness is heartlessness. Therefore in the 12th Chapter of this book, *verse 3.* the heart is put alone for understanding, *I have an heart as well as you* (saith *Job*) we translate it, *I have understanding as well as you*. Heart alone notes wisdom, but a wise heart notes abundance of wisdom.

Hence observe,

God is infinitely wise.

He is wise in heart, wisdom it self, the Lord ingrosses all wisdom, and is therefore stiled by the Apostle, *God only wise* (*1 Tim. 1. 17.*) he is only wise, because all wisdom is his; the creature hath none but what he gives out; he hath it all lockt up in his own treasury; and as he dispenseth it, so man receives it.

There is a twofold act of wisdom, and both most eminent in God. The first is knowledge in the nature of things. The second is, knowledge how to order and dispose of things. The former is properly called *Science*, and the latter *prudence*. Where there is much of the former, and a want of the latter, man in that case is like a Ship that hath a very large sail, but wants a rudder to order it's course, and ballast to poise it. Both these meet in the Lord: he hath (as we may say) a vast sail, infinitely extending to the knowledge of all things: and he hath a most exact rudder, and ballast of prudence, to order and to manage all things. The knowledge of some men is too hard for their wisdom, they are not masters of their knowledge, though they may be masters in their art. The Lord knows all, and he rules all his knowledge.

And mighty in strength.

It is much for man, to be stiled *strong* or *mighty*; but *mighty in strength* is the stile of God. These in construction note the Almightyness, the All-powerfulness, the All-sufficiency of the Lord; he is not only strong or mighty, but mighty in strength.

The word which we translate *strength* (referred to man) imports that natural power and lively vigour which in man is the principle of strength, which nurses and feeds man with continual supplies of activity. The Lord is mighty in this strength, he hath an infinite, an everlasting spring of strength in him, he spends no

strength

בית

Differt à

חיל

quod strenuitatem ad gesta praeclara significat, idem quod

Græcè

δύναμις quæ se foras exerit in opere. Merc.

strength at all, how much soever he uses. His lamp consumes not with burning. His strength is ever vigorous, he knows no decays or faintings, *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creatour of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary?* (Isa. 40. 28.) As if he had said, where hast thou been bred, that thou seemest to be a stranger to this truth? Man cannot doe much, and he faints in doing a little. God who can do all things, never faints, how much soever he doth.

Strength may be considered two wayes. There is civil strength, and there is natural strength. Civil strength is authority and power to command. A man is armed and strengthened by laws and commissions. These put authority into his hands. The Lord is mighty in this strength, he hath all authority, all command in his hand, not by commission from others, but originally from himself. Natural strength executes and exercises the former; a man may have much civil strength, but if he want natural strength to put it in act, he can do little or nothing. As God by his Sovereignty is above all creatures; so by his power he is able to bring all creatures under him, and subdue them to his command. Thus God is mighty in strength. He hath a right of authority, by which he may, and an arm of power, by which he can make all stoop to him. Hence observe,

The power of God is an infinite power.

There is nothing too hard for the Lord, *If he will work, who shall let it?* Isa. 43. 13. No creature can supersedeate or stay the works of God, God can supersedeate all creatures; when creatures are in their full career, he can lett them: *The power of God is as large as his will*; yea he can more then he wills. If the power of men were as large as their wills, what work would they quickly make in the world? If infinite strength were not managed by infinite wisdom, what a woful condition were we in? Both these are joynd in God. Therefore we can fear no hurt from his power: He can do what he will, but he will do nothing which is hurtful to his people; he will not wrong any creature, much less his servants. The Lord (if I may so speak) is only weak about those things, which proceed from weakness. There are some things which he hath no strength to do, because to do them argues a want of strength: he cannot deny himself, he cannot lye, he cannot do any evil, he cannot sin. These things import

port impotency, therefore the Lord cannot do them. But whatsoever is for the good of his people, for the glory of his name, for the executing of his justice, for the fulfilling of his counsels, whatsoever is for the making good of his promises, for all these the Lord is mighty in strength. Never fear either a defect of power in God, or a defect in managing that power. Sometimes power overthrows it self by its own bulk and greatness; but mighty strength ordered with equal wisdom, is dreadful to enemies, and comfortable to friends. *A rude rout, an undigested Chaos of men, though very great, never did any great thing.* But suppose a very numerous army of men, and every man in that army having as much wisdom as would fit a General to lead and command them all, what could stand before them? thus it is with God (and how admirable is the union and marriage of these two together!) he hath all power and all wisdom. Every degree of power in God is acted with a suitable degree of wisdom; therefore there can be no miscarriage.

*Vis consilij ex
pers mole ruit
sua.*

Note further, how this Attribute runs thorow all the Attributes of God, *He is mighty in strength*; he is mighty also in truth, mighty in love, mighty in mercy, mighty in faithfulness: a mighty strength is in whatsoever God is.

Again, take this general concerning all the Attributes of God, when it is said, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength, &c.* These are not qualities in God; they are in men. Wisdom is to them an accident, and so is strength, whether civil strength, or natural, it may be severed from them, and they still keep their being. But the wisdom of God is the wise God, and the power of God is the powerfull God, and the knowledge of God is the knowing God. These Attributes are not accidents, but his essence; not qualities, but his nature.

From both these Attributes laid together, Job draws down his great conclusion, which he puts by way of question.

Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?

Shew me the man: having described the Lord in his wisdom and power he challengeth all the world, and sends defiance to all creatures in heaven and in earth, to meet with this God. As if he had said, *Friends, do you think I have any thought to contend with God? No, I know not one who hath accepted this challenge, or hardened himself against God and prospered. If my own Conscience would*

not

not, yet their harms who have attempted it, might warn me from such presumption.

Hardeneth himself.

Indur are aut
obdurefcere.
Metaphoricè à
tactu ad alios
sensus transfer-
tur, & denotat
crudele fœvum,
difficile, quod
dura sunt diffi-
cilia
Durum est quod
in se per super-
ficiem non ce-
dit. Arist. l. 4.
Met. c. 4.
Durities est
qualitas densas
et bene compa-
ctas habens
partes, diffi-
liter cedens ta-
ctui Arist. l. 2.
de Gener.

* Adamas ejus
creditur esse,
naturæ, ut vo-
met omnia
neq; ipse ab
ulla vi sine ar-
te domari
possit. Unde n-
omen iracundie;
à δαμασ,
sonat indomi-
tum. Sancti in
Ezek. 3.

Hardening under a natural consideration, comes by withdraw-
ing the moisture out of any substance, whence the parts of it are
condensed, grow stiff and unyielding to the touch : So Philoso-
phers define it. That is hard which doth not easily submit to im-
pressions from without.

In a moral sense, to harden is to settle the spirit, or immovea-
bly to resolve upon the doing or not doing of a thing: when a man
doth purposely resolve and resolvedly purpose to carry on a design,
he hardeneth himself to do it. The word is used both in a good
sense and in an ill sense. In a good sense, when a man is resolute to
do the will of God, that is, when he grows so resolved that he will
not be removed by hopes or fears, by promises or by threats; when
a man hath not a soft, sequacious spirit to be swayed this way and
that way, but stands fixed and firm like a rock; such a resolute spi-
rit in goodness, is a spirit hardened to do good.

When the Lord had told Ezekiel that he should find the ears of
Israel lock'd against his messages, and their hearts hardened, he
gives him assurance of a suitable ability to deal with such (Ezek.
3. 8, 9.) Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy
fore-head strong against their fore-heads, as an adamant harder then
flint have I made thy fore-head. The words seem to carry an allusi-
on to Bulls or Rams, who use to run head against head, when they
are enraged one against another. And so the sense is, as if the Lord
had said, I know this people will be mad at thee, and run upon thee
like furious beasts; but trouble not thy self, I will (through my grace)
make thee as strong in declaring my will, as they (through pride and
unbelief) are strong in opposing it. Thou needest not fear to encounter
these Bulls and Rams: holiness shall make thy fore-head, that is, thy
purpose to perform my command, harder, then wickedness shall make
their fore-head, that is, their purposes to disobey what I command. As
to be hardened in sin is worse then sinning, so to be hardened in
doing good is better then doing good. Sin and grace act most like
themselves, when they act against all opposition. As an adamant
have I made thy face. The adamant is insuperable, as the nota-
tion of the word imports. A heart thus hardened in holiness
overcomes all the fears and terrors which the world can raise
against it. Heroicall Luther was thus hardened, when he saith, he

would go to *Worms*, though the tiles upon every house in that City were matcht with a like number of *Devils*, ready to resist him and the truth of Christ. But usually hardening is taken in an ill sense: and so to harden the spirit, noteth,

First, A resolving to sin, what soever God saith or doth. To sin against the word and works of God, that's hardning of the heart against God: when a man will go on in his way, though a threat be sounding in his ears, and a judgement appear terribly before his eyes; such a man is hardened indeed, he is grown valiant and couragious in wickedness.

Secondly, A man hardens himself against God, when he speaks stoutly against God: the hardness of the heart appears in the tongue (Mal. 3. 13.) *Your words have been stout against me.* Stout words are a sign of stout spirits. Our language is usually the image of our minds. So the words of the text is used (2 Sam. 19. 43.) *The words of the men of Judah were fiercer then the words of the men of Israel:* Their words were harder then the words of the men of Israel; they spake more resolutely and manly. When a man sets himself to speak boldly against God, the wayes or the works of God, he hardens himself against God fearfully.

Thirdly, We harden our selves against God when we are displeased with what God doth; That man makes a bold adventure, who dares pass but an unpleasing thought against the wayes or works of God.

Fourthly, Not to be satisfied with what God doth, is a degree of hardening our selves against God: discontents and unquietnesses upon our spirits are oppositions.

Fifthly, Not to give God glory in what he doth, hath somewhat in it of hardening our selves against God.

And lastly, He that will not give God glory in what he commands, is in a degree hardned against God. We may see what it is to harden our selves against God by the opposite of it (Pro. 28. 14.) *Blessed is the man that feareth alwayes; but he that bardeneth himself shall fall into mischief.* Hardness is contrary to holy fear; holy fear is a disposition of heart ready to yeeld to God in every thing: A man thus fearing, quickly takes impressions of the word, will and works of God; and therefore whosoever doth not comply with God in holy submission to his will, hardens himself in part against God.

That which is here chiefly meant is, the grosser act of hardness, when men either speak or go on in their way acting against God; let

*Obdurare cor
est Deum lo-
quentem nolle
audire, contem-
nere, per viva-
citer resistere,
nec se ejus
verba subicere
velle Par. in
Heb. c. 3. v. 8.*

him say what he will, his word stops them not; or do what he will, his works stop them not. They are like the adamant, the hammer of the Word makes no impression upon hard hearts, but recoyls back again upon him that strikes with it. More distinctly; this is either a sensible hardness of heart, of which the church complains (*Isa. 63. 15.*) *Wherefore hast thou hardened our hearts?* &c. or an insensible hardness, which in some arises from ignorance, in others from malice and obstinacy.

Further, We read of Gods hardening mans heart, and sometime of mans hardning his own heart. There is a threefold hardness of heart.

First, Naturall, which is the common stock of all men; we receive the stone of a hard heart by descent; every man comes into the world hardened against God.

Secondly, There is an acquired hardness of heart. Men harden themselves, and add to their former hardness. *He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty,* Job 15. 25. There is a growth in sin, as well as a growth in grace, many acts make hardness more habituell (*2 Chron. 36. 13.*) *He stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord. I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck,* Deut. 31. 27.

Thirdly, There is a judiciary hardness of heart, an heard heart inflicted by God, as a Judge. When men will harden their hearts against God, he agrees it, their hearts shall be hard, he will take away all the means which should soften and moisten them, he will not give them any help to make them pliable to his will, or he will not bless it to them. He will speak to his profits, and they shall make their hearts fat (that is, senseless) and their ears heavy, that is, heedless under all they speak, *Isa. 6. 10.* Thus also God hardened the heart of *Pharaoh* and of the *Ægyptians* by the ministry of *Moses* and *Aaron*.

So then we having hardness of heart by nature, do by custome acquire a further hardness, and the Lord in wrath inflecteth hardness, then the sinner is pertinacious in sinning. All these put together make him irrecoverably sinfull, *His neck is an iron sinew, and his brow brass,* *Isa. 48. 4.*

Observe, first, *There is an active hardness of heart, or man hardens his own heart.* Exod. 5. We read of *Pharaoh* hardning his heart, before the Lord hardened it; *Who is the Lord* (saith he) *that I should*

should let Israel goe? Here was Pharaoh hardening his heart, and steeling his spirit against the command of God. God sent him a command to let Israel goe; he replies, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord*: who is this that takes upon him to command me? Am not I King of *Ægypt*? I know no Peer, much less Superiour Lord. It was true indeed, poor creature! he did not know the Lord; Pharaoh spoke right in that, *I know not the Lord*; if he had, he would never have said, *I will not let Israel go*, he would have let all goe at his command, had he known who the Lord was that commanded. Thus Sennacherib (2 Chron. 32. 14.) blasphemes by his messengers, *Who was there among all the gods of those Nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?* These are hard words against God, and hardening words to man.

Every act of sin hardens the heart of man, but the heat of blasphemy at once shews and puts it into the extremity of hardness. Man hardens himself against God four wayes especially.

First, Upon presumption of mercy; many doe evil, because they heare God is good; they turn his grace into wantonness, and are without all fear of the Lord, because there is so much mercy with the Lord.

Secondly, The patience of God, or his delayes of judgment, harden others; because God is slow to strike, they are swift to sin. If the sound of judgment be not at the heels of sin, they conclude, there is no such danger in sin. Solomon observed this (Eccl. 8. 11.) *Because sentence against any evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil, or, it is full in them to doe evil.* They have not some velleities and propensions, some motions and inclinations, some queries and debates about it, but the matter (upon this ground) is fully stated and determined, they are so full of it, that they have no room in their hearts for better thoughts or counsels: the sum of all is, they are hardened and resolved to do evil.

Thirdly, Gross ignorance hardens many, 1. Ignorance of themselves. And, 2. Ignorance of God: he that knows not what he ought to doe, cares not much what he doth. None are so venturous as they, who know not their danger. Pharaoh said, *I know not the Lord*, he knew not the Lord, nor himself, therefore he ran on blind-fold, and desperately hardened himself against the Lord.

Fourthly, Hardness of heart in sinning is contracted from the multitude of those who sin. They think none shall suffer for that which so many doe. The Law of Moses said, *Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil* (Exod. 23. 2.) There is a special restraint upon it, because man is so easily led by many. The heart is ready to flatter it self into an opinion, that God will not be very angry, when a practice is grown common: this is the course of the world, this is the way of most men; therefore surely no great danger in it. And examples harden chiefly upon three considerations.

*Ego homuncio
non facerem.
Ter.*

First, If great ones go that way. The Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickednesses of the gods, said, what? Doe they so, *and shall I stick at it?*

Secondly, If some wise and learned men go that way; ignorant and unlearned men conclude they may.

Thirdly, If any godly men, such as make more then ordinary profession, doe such things, then who may not? The failings of the Saints are a countenance to wicked men in their follies. They are apt to follow the dark side of the cloud, and to approve those in what they doe ill, whom they scorn in what they doe well. They imitate their falls and sins, whose repentance they never think of imitating. How many harden their hearts by their doing what is evil, whose hearts have been broken, because they did evil? From the sin which a holy man commits against his purpose and resolution, many purpose and resolve to commit it.

Upon these and the like grounds, the heart of man is hardened against God. Take a brief of the degrees of this hardness; see by what steps the heart rises so high in sinning. Man doth not grow hard at once, much less hardest. But when once he begins to harden himself, where he shall make an end he knows not.

The first step is, the taking time and leave to meditate upon sin, and roll it up and down in the thoughts. A hard heart lets vain thoughts dwell in it. A holy heart would not let them lodge with it.

A second step is, some tastes of pleasure and delight in sin. It proves a sweet morsell under his tongue. As the heart grows more delighted in sin, so more hardened in sin. Nothing should be so bitter as sin in the act, for nothing will be so bitter as sin in issue; but when the act it pleasant, the issue is seldome suspected.

The third step is, custome in sinning. It argues great boldness to venture often. One said of him that had escaped danger at sea, *Improbè Nep. tunum accusat, qui iterum naufragium facit.* If you go again, you have no reason to complain, though you be wrack'd. Mariners are fearfull of storms at first, but through custome they play with them. When a man comes off once safe from sin, he will venture again, and so often, till at last he thinks there is scarce any venture at all in sin. He grows bold and hardy.

By the fourth step of hardness he comes to defend and maintain his sin. He hath spoken so long in his heart against the word, which forbiddeth him to sin, that now he can speak against it with his tongue. He hath a plea or an argument to make the evil he doth good. He appears a Patron, an Advocate for sin, who was before but a practiser of it.

Fifthly, The hard heart grows angry and passionate with those, who give advice against sin; he is resolved; and a man that is resolved in his way, is angry if he be desired to remove out of his way: He that resolveth to sleep, loves not to be awakened. A touch or a jog from him that sits by, provokes him, he prayes to be let alone. We should love the man while we hate and reprove his sin. But he that loves his sin will hate his reprovers.

Sixthly, Hard hearts grow too hard for the Word, they are *Sermon-proof*; they can sit under the Preacher, and heare from day to day, but nothing touches them. A man in armour feels not the stroke of a sword, much lesse the smart of a rod. This hardness of heart is a steel armour to the heart, it makes the man past feeling till he be past healing. *Some being often reprov'd harden their hearts* (Prov. 29. 1.) till their hearts are too hard for all reproofes.

And then seventhly, The heart is so hard that the sword of affliction doth not pierce it, the man is *judgment-proof*: let God strike him in his person or estate, let God set the world a Fire about his ears, yet on goes he. He is like the man of whom Solomon speaks, (Prov. 23. 34.) who lies sleeping in a storm upon the top of a mast.

Eightly, the hard heart sits down in the chair of the Scorn, he derides the Word, and mocks at the judgements of God. When Lot spake to his sons in law about fire and brimstone, ready to fall upon Sodome and consume it, the text saith, *He seemed as one that mocked unto his sonnes in Law*? what, tell us of judgments? of fire descending

descending from Heaven. *When the skie falls we shall have Larkes.*

Lastly, The hard heart gets up to the Tribunall of the persecutor, and from scorner commences opposer of good men, and of the good wayes of God; he will do them the uttermost mischief he can, who would doe him all the good they can. *Get thee from me saith Pharaoh to Moses, (Exod. 10. 28.) Take heed to thy self: See my face no more; for the day that thou seest my face thou shalt dye.* Pharaohs hard heart spake hard words, and was preparing to give hard blows: he had only so much of honour and ingenuity left, as to warn the Prophet to avoid the blow: Which yet is more then hardness of heart leaves to all. Many an hard heart uses the hand before the tongue; and instead of saying to his reprover, *See my face no more,* lest thou die, calls him before his face, that he may dye, or seek his death behinde his back, and lies in wait for revenge. And here hardness of heart is at hardest. *It is now a fit cushion for Satan: He sits softest upon this stone,* The devil is never so much pleased, as when man is most hardened; the seed of his temptations takes root and prospers best in this stony ground.

But shall man prosper too? Shall any man thrive or make a gain by hardening himself against God? Shall he come off with honour or with profit? *Job answereth, Who hath hardned himself against him, and hath prospered?* Which may be resolved into this negative proposition, *No man ever hardned himself against God and prospered.*

וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּח
Et pacatus fuit,
vel in pace abiit (i. e.) feliciter & benecesserit, Merc. Nemo pertinacem gloriari potest, quod post coniectam victoriam, paco potius fuerit. Pined. Nemo cum Deo pugnans, sic eum assidue pugna fatigavit, ut pacem accipiat ulro a Deo oblatam. Idem.

The Hebrew thus, *Hath any man hardened himself against God, and had peace?* Mr. Broughton renders near it, *Hath any man hardned himself against God, and found quietness?* To have peace or quietness, and to prosper, are the same in the language of the Jews, and in an hundred Texts of the old Testament.

We may understand *Job* either of these three wayes.

First, No pertinacious hard-hearted man could ever glory that he got the better, or the day of God, and so prospered into a peace by war; that's away of prosperity, in which he shall never tread. *Gideon*, told the men of Penuel, *when I come again in peace;* that is, when I have conquered and return prosperous, then, &c. No man ever conquered God, and so returned in peace. Peace was never the Trophie of a war with him.

Secondly, *who ever hardened himself against God and prospered?* That is, did ever any man so weary out God by lengthening this war,

war,

war, that God was (as it were) forced at last to offer him terms of peace? So it happens sometimes with men, with Nations and Kingdoms; They not getting peace by victory, but being spent and tired out with war, begin to think of treating. Did ever any one put the Lord to offer a treaty with articles of peace, to save himself from further trouble? They who have not strength enough to overcome, may yet have power enough to vex and weary their adversary. But God can neither be vanquish'd by force, nor vexed with our policies into a peace with man.

Thirdly, Others give this sense, Who ever held out, or was able to persist in a war against the Lord? The wicked shall not stand before God in the day of judgement, much lesse in the day of battell; *Who would set the briers and thorns against me in battell? I would go thorow them, I would burn them together* (Isa. 27. 4.) The most steely and flinty spirits in the world can no more stand before God, then briars and thorns can before a flaming fire. The Lord soon breaks and destroyes all opposing power. And so there is a figure in the words, for, man doth not only not prosper, but he is undone and crusht for ever, by contending with God. Shall man prosper in a war with God? No, it shall end in his own ruine and utter destruction. Whence observe,

That nothing can be got but blows by contending with God.

The greatest Monarchs in the world have at one time or other found their matches, but the great God never found his match. Pharaoh contended with him, but did he prosper in it? You see what became of him at last, he was drown'd in the red sea. Julian contended with Christ, scoffed at him, (he came up to the highest degrees, he sate in the chair of the scorner, and in the tribunal of the persecutor) but what got he at last? When he was wounded and threw up his blood toward heaven, said he not, *O Galilean, thou hast overcome*, I acknowledge thy power, whose name and truth I have opposed. Christ whom he had derided, and against whom he hardned himself into scorns and scoffs, was too hard for him. All that harden themselves against God shall be worsted. *Gather your selves together, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in peices*, (Isa. 8. 19.) *Gather your selves together against whom? Gather your selves together against the people of God, and ye shall be broken in peices; Why? Emanuel, the Lord is with us. If no man can prosper by hardening himself against the people of God, because the Lord is with them, how shall any man prosper*

Ab æquipollente pa. emali, ut pugnando obtinere potest; licet enim eum superare non possit, tamen assiduitate pugnae eum fatigat, ut ad pacem reducatur. Aquin. Quis permanet, aut persistit, et præquerit. Sep.

Hoc est signum evidens, quod fortitudo Dei omnem humanam fortitudinem excedit; quia nullus cum eo pacem habere potest resistendo, sed solum humiliter obediendo. Aquin. Vicisti Galileo.

prosper by hardening himself immediatly against God? If Emanuel will not let any prosper against his people, certainly he will not let any prosper against himself. Therefore (Prov. 28. 24.) Solomon layes it down directly, *He that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief*; and (Prov. 29. 1.) *He shall be destroyed, and that without remedy*; there is no help for it, all the world cannot save him. A heard hart is it self the forest of all judgements, and it brings all judgements upon us. *A hard heart treasureth up wrath against the day of wrath* (Rom. 2. 5.) *As a hard heart is Satans treasury for sin, so it is Gods treasury for wrath.* The walls of that fiery Tophet are built up with these stones, with their hard hearts, who turn themselves into stones against the Lord.

Then take heed of hardning your selves against God. You know the counsell which Gamaliel gave, *Act 5. 39. Refrain from these men, and let them alone, &c.* (See how trembling he speaks) lest you be found even to fight against God; as if he had said, take heed what you doe, it is the most dreadfull thing in the world to contend with God; he speaks as of a thing he would not have them come near, or be in the remotest tendency to. Man will not meddle with a mortall man, if he be too hard for him: how should we tremble to meddle or contend with the immortall God! Christ, Luk. 14. warning his Disciples to consider before-hand what it is to be his disciples, gives them an instance of a King: *What King* (saith he) *going to make war against another King, sitteth not down first and consulteth, whether he be able with ten thousand, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?* Now, I say to you (if any such be here) that have hearts steeld or harden'd against God, who challenge God the field, and send defiance to heaven, O sit down, sit down, consider whether you with your ten thousand, are able to meet God with his twenty thousand, that's great odds, half in half; but consider whether one single, simple man, can stand against his twenty thousand; whether a man of no strength can stand against infinite strength; whether you who have no wisdom, are able to stand against him that is of infinite wisdom. Can ignorance contend with knowledge, folly with wisdom, weakness with strength, an earthen vessel with an iron rod? O the boldness and madness of men, who will hazard themselves upon such disadvantages. *He is wise in heart, and mighty in power, who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*

And as God is so powerfull that no wicked man in the world can

can mend himself by contending with him: so neither can any of his own people. If they harden themselves against God, they shall not prosper. To harden the heart against God, is not only the sin of a *Pharaoh*, of a *Senacherib*, and of a *Julian*, but possibly it may be the sin of a *believer*, the sin of a *Saint*. And therefore the Apostle, *Heb. 3.* gives them caution, *Take heed lest any of your hearts be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*; and whose heart soever is hardened against God, that man good or bad shall not prosper, or have peace in it. It is mercy that God will not give his own peace, or let them thrive in sin. Grace prospers not, when the heart is hardened; joy prospers not, nor comfort, nor strength, when the heart is hardened: the whole state and stock of a *believer* is impaired, when his heart is hardened.

And if the Saints harden their heart against God, God (in a sense) will harden his heart against them; that is, he will not appear tender hearted, and compassionate towards them, in reference to present comforts; he will harden himself to afflict and chasten, when they harden themselves to sin and provoke.

When God afflicts his people, he hardens his heart against them; and it is seldome that he hardeneth his heart against them till they harden their hearts against him. And the truth is, if they who are dearest to him do harden their hearts against him; if they quarrel and contend with him; if they rise up against his commands, or neglect his will, he will make their hearts submit, or he will make their hearts ake, and break their bones. If they harden their hearts against his fear, they shall feel his rod upon their backs and spirits too. Which of the Saints ever hardened himself against God and hath prospered? No man, whether holy or prophane, righteous or wicked, could ever glory of a conquest over God, or triumph after a war with him.

J O B, Chap. 9. Vers. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Which removeth the mountains, and they know not: which overturneth them in his anger.

Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.

Which commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not: and sealeth up the Stars.

Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.

Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.

Which doth great things past finding out, yea and wonders without number.

J O B having in general asserted the power and wisdom of God (he must have infinite power and wisdom: against whom no man ever prospered by contending.) Having I say asserted this in general, he descends to make a particular proof of it; as if he had said, I will not only give you this argument, that God is mighty in strength, because no man could ever harden his heart against him, and prosper, he hath foyle'd all that ever medled with him: but besides, I will give you particular instances of it, and you shall see that the Lord hath done such things, as speak him mighty in strength, and prove him as powerful, as I have reported him. These particulars are reported, in the 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. verses, all closed with a triumphant Elogy in the tenth, *Which doth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.*

Subjicit Job
confirmationem
proxime præce-
dentis sylogis-
mi ab esse dis-
tinctione & sapi-
entiae Dei, quæ
omnissima ora-
tionis describit.
Merl;

The Argument may be thus formed;

He is infinite in power and wisdom, who removeth mountains, and shakes the earth, who commands the Sun, who spreads out the heavens, and disposeth of the Stars in the firmament.

But the Lord doth all these things, he removeth mountains, he shakes the earth, he commandeth the Sun, &c.

Therefore he is mighty in power, and infinite in wisdom.

The first part of his argument is here implied. The assumption,

or

or the minor is proved in the 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. verses, by so many instances. Here then is an evident demonstration of the power of God from visible things, from acts apparent to the eye; as if he had said, *If you have not faith to beleive that God is infinite in power, let your senses teach it you, for he removeth mountains, and they know it not, He overturneth them in his anger, &c.*

He removeth mountains.

πῆνυ

That's the first instance. The word which we translate to remove signifies to wax old and strong, because things as they grow in age grow in strength. There is a declining age, and an encreasing age. Things very old impair, and things growing older encrease in strength; we have the word in that sense (Job 21. 2.) *Wherefore do the wicked become old? yea, they are mighty in power*; he putteth these two together, growing old and mighty in power. The Septuagint render, *who maketh the mountains wax old*, because, *that which waxeth old is ready to vanish away* (Heb. 8. 13.) or to be removed and taken away, as the Ceremonial Law was, of which the Apostle speaks in that place.

Senescere; quia
quæ sic invete-
rascunt fortiora
et robustiora
cum tempore so-
lent evadere,
ideo idem ver-
bum significat
roborari.
ὁ παλαιὸν ὄρη.
Sept.

And because growing old implies a kind of motion, therefore the word also signifies motion, even local motion, a moving from or out of a place, Gen. 12. 4. *Abraham departed*; he removed from the place where he was. This locall motion is either natural or violent: of this latter understand the Text, *Which removeth the mountains.*

The mountains.

There are natural mountains, and metaphorical or figurative mountains: it is an act of the mighty power of God to remove either.

Some understand this of metaphorical or figurative mountains, and so mountains are great men, men of eminency or of pre-eminency, the Kings and Princes of the world. The Chaldee is express for this sense, *He removeth Kings, who are as strong and high as mountains*. For as God hath ordered the superficies of the earth, and made some parts of it plain, others mountainous, some valleys and some hills. So he hath disposed of men, some men stand as upon level ground, men of an ordinary condition; others are as the low vallies, men of a poor condition; others are as the high mountains over-topping and over-looking the rest. The word is

Chaldeus per
montes intello-
git reges, qui
loco movet
reges fortes,
ut montes.
Sept.

used in this metaphorical sense, Isa. 41. 15. *I will make thee (saith the Lord to the Prophet) a new threshing instrument having teeth; And what shall this new threshing instrument do? Thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.* Here is a Prophet sent with a flail or a threshing instrument, & his business is to thresh the mountains, and to beat the hills: the meaning is, thou shalt destroy the great ones of the world, the hills, the mountains, those that think themselves impregnable or inaccessible. But how could the Prophet thresh these mountains, and what was his flail? Gideon (Judg. 8. 7.) threatens the men of Succoth, that he will *tear or thresh their flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with bryars.* And Damascus is threatened, because *they threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron,* Am. 1. 3. That is they put them to extreamest tortures. Our Prophet could not thus torture men. His threshing instrument having iron teeth, was only his tongue, the instrument of speech, with this he beat those proud mountains to dust, that is, he declared they should be beaten and destroyed. Of such a mountain, the Lord by his Prophet speaks (Jer. 51. 25.) *Behold I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth. Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain.* This mountain was the proud State of Babylon, which was opposite to the Church of God, this devouring mountain shall at last be a devoured mountain, devoured by fire, therefore he calls it a burnt mountain. Thus (Zech. 4. 7.) *Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.* The Prophet is assured, that all the power and strength, which opposed it self against the reformation and re-edification of Jerusalem, should be laid leuell with the ground. So we may interpret (Psalm. 144. 5.) *He toucheth the mountains, and they smoak;* the meaning is, when God doth but lay his hand upon great men, upon the mightiest of the world, he makes them smoak or fume, which some understand of their anger, they are presently in a passion, if God do but touch them. Or, we may understand it of their consumption. A smoking mountain will soon be a burnt mountain. In our language, to make a man smoak, is a proverbiall, for destroying or subduing.

And besides, there are mountains (in this figurative sense) within us, as well as without us. The soul hath a mountain in it self, and is an act of the great power of God, yea, of an higher and

*Per montes in
telligit reges,
qui sicut mon-
tes, firmitate
& robore per-
stant, Rab.
Dav. in Psal.
344. 5*

and greater power of God to remove inward, than it is to remove outward mountains, *Isa. 40. 4.* The Prophet fore-shewing the coming of Christ, and the sending of the Baptist to prepare his way, tells us, *Every mountain and hill shall be made low.* Christ did not throw down the outward power of men, who withstood him; he let *Herod and Pilate* prevail; but mountains and hills of sin and unbelief in the soul, which made his passage into them impassible, he overthrew. These mountains of high proud thoughts, the Apostle describes (*2 Cor. 10. 14.*) *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing, and bringing into captivity every thought.* (every mountainous thought) *to the obedience of Christ.*

These are metaphorical mountains, the power of sinfull men without us, and the power of sin, the pride of our own hearts within us. It is a mighty work of God to remove these mountains.

But these are not proper to the Text, for the instances which follow, being all given in natural things, shew, that those here intended are natural mountains.

Taking mountains for earthly, material mountains, it is doubted how the Lord removes them.

There are different opinions about the point. Some understand it of a natural motion. * Philosophers disputing about mountains and hills, conclude that they are subject to generation and corruption; by the addition of many parts they are generated, that is, kneaded or gathered together, and become one huge heap of earth; and by the detraction falling and crumbling off, or taking away of these parts, they are removed again. Thus we may expound that (*Job 14. 18.*) *And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought.*

Yet this cannot be the meaning of Job here. For though we grant that doctrine of the Philosophers, that there is a generation of mountains, and so a corruption of them, yet that corruption is so insensible, that it cannot be put among those works of God, which raise up the name of his glorious power. * *That which falls not under observation, cannot cause admiration. Slow and imperceptible motions make small impressions either upon the fancy or understanding.*

That here spoken of, is quick and violent, and by its easie representation to the eye, causeth wonder and astonishment in the beholders.

And so it imports a removeing them by some violent motion.

Thus

* *Montes naturalia sua generabiles sunt & corruptibiles, additione partium generantur, & detractione partium corrumpuntur.* Aquin. & Cai.

Minus est mirandum est, si quas terrae partes, quae nunc habitantur, olim mare occupabat, et quae nunc pelagus sunt, olim habitabantur, sic campos et montes par est invicem commutari. Strab. l. 17.

* *Divina potentia in tam longa et segni montium remotione non se praebet valde mirabilem cum nemo fere sit, qui eam rem videat.*

Pined.

Thus the Lord is able to remove, and hath removed mountains, sometimes by earthquakes: sometimes by storms and Tempests, sometime those mighty bulwarks are battered with thunder-balls discharged from the clouds (Psal. 97. 5.) *The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord.* Hills melt down when he appears as a consuming fire (Psal. 104. 32.) *He looks upon the earth and it trembleth, and he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.* Those rocky mountains are as ready to take fire, as tinder or touch-wood, if but a spark of Gods anger fall upon them. God by a cast of his eye (as we may speak) can cast the earth into an ague-fit, he makes it shake and move, tremble with a look; he by a touch of his mighty arm, hurls mountains which way he pleaseth, as a man doth a Tennis-ball. We read (Isa. 64. 1.) *How earnestly the Prophet prays, O that thou wouldst rent the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence:* Where he is conceived to allude to Gods coming down upon mount Sinai at the giving of the Law, Exod. 19. which is said, *To melt from before the Lord God of Israel,* Judg. 5. 3. Some understand it of *that day* of Christ, when he shall come to judge the world; others of that day when Christ came in the flesh to save the world; then the mountains were levell'd according to the preaching of the Baptist; but rather, the Prophet being affected with the calamitous condition, which he fore-saw the Jews falling into, entreats the Lord to put forth himself in some notable works of his providences, which should as clearly manifest his presence, as if they saw the heavens (speaking as of solid bodies) rent-ing, and God visibly coming down; then, those difficulties which lay in the way of their deliverance, and looked like huge mountains of Iron, or of Adamant, would presently dissolve like wax, or ice before the Sun or fire. The prophet Micah describes the effects of Gods power in the same stile (Chap. 1. 3, 4.) *Behold the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth, and the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft: as wax before the fire, and as the waters that are poured down a steep place.* So, to remove mountains is used proverbially, Job 18. 4. *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, or shall the rock be removed out of his place;* that is, shall God work wonders for thee? Or, God will alter the course of nature, as soon as the course of his providence. To say God can remove mountains, is as much as to say, he hath power to do what he will: and the reason is, because mountains are exceeding great

Ex quo et hoc
loco non absur-
de colligitur j.
iste proverbii
um ad signifi-
candum magni-
tudinem soliq; Leo-
convenientem
potentiam.
Bold

great and weighty bodies : mountains are firmly settled ; now, to remove a thing, which is mighty in bulk, and strongly founded, is an argument of greatest strength. The stability of the Church is compared to the stability of mountains, *Psal. 125.1. They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but standeth fast for ever.* The righteousness of God is compared to a great mountain (*Psal. 36. 6.*) because his righteousness is firm and unmoveable, *Thy righteousness is like the great mountains,* or the mountains of God. And (*Psal. 46.2.*) the doing of the greatest things, and the making of the greatest changes that possibly can happen in any Nation, or in the whole world, are exprest by the removing of mountains, *Though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea, yet will we not fear, &c.* That is, things which carry the greatest impossibility to be done, or which are seldomest to be done, shall be done, before we will do this. As men, when they would shew how far they are from submitting to such a thing, say, We will die first, &c. So here, Who, we fear? No, mountains shall be removed first. He breaths out the highest confidence of the Church, in the lowest, not only of her present, but possible dangers. As faith can represent to us better things then any ~~any~~ we enjoy, to raise our joy: so it can represent to us worse things (and put us harder cases) then any we feel, and yet carry us above fear. A faith removing mountains, is put for the strongest faith, *Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains* (*1 Cor. 13.2.*) that is, though I had the strongest faith, the faith of miracles. When Christ (*Mat. 21. 21.*) would shew to the utmost what faith can do, he saith, *If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done.* As if he had said, if you have faith, ye may do the greatest things imaginable or desirable, ye shall remove mountains. A mountain is immoveable by the meer power of a creature. Faith takes that in hand, because faith acts in the power of the Creatour. And as the faith of man removing mountains, notes a faith of miracles; so the power of God removing mountains, notes a miraculous power.

So then, taking this speech either for the removing of natural mountains, or taking it proverbially, as it noteth the doing of the greatest things, and putting forth of the greatest power, it proveth the point, which Job hath here in hand, viz. That God is mighty.

mighty in strength; Why? He is able to remove mountains. Observe from hence,

First, That the Lord if he pleaseth can alter and remove the parts of the earth, and change the frame and fabrick of nature.

He that made the mountains unmoveable to us, can himself remove them. The Histories and Records of former times tell us how God hath miraculously tossed mountains out of their places. *Josephus* in his ninth book of Antiquities, cap. 11. mentions the removing of a mountain; and *Pliny* in the eight book of his natural History, Cap. 30. A later writer reports, that in *Burgundy* in the year, 1230. there were mountains seen moving, which overthrew many houses, to the great terrour of all the inhabitants of those countries. *Josephus* also reports the like done by an earthquake. And another tells us of Mount *Ossa* joyned to *Olympus* by an earth-quake. So that take it in the letter, the Lord is able to remove mountains.

It should make us fear before the Lord, and give him glory while we remember that even the outward frame of the world, is subject to sudden changes; there is no mountain, no rock, but the little finger of God can move or pull it down. As *David* spake of his metaphoricall mountain, his great outward estate. Lord, thou hadst made it stand strong, yet thou didst hide away thy face, and I was troubled, *Psal* 30. 6. his mountain began to shake, and became a very mole-hill, useles to him, when God was displeased. If the Lord with-draw himself from our civil mountains, we are troubled, and if he touch the natural mountains they are troubled. Our mountains will skip like Rams, and the little hills like Lambs, (*Psal*. 114. 4.) when he is displeased.

Secondly, observe, That the power of God is made v'sible to us in the changes which he works in the creature, as well as in the constitution of the creature.

The power of God made the mountains and created the hills; the same power removes mountains, and turns them upside down. It argues as great a power to destroy the world as to settle the world. As the Apostle shews what divinity the Gentiles might have learned in that great book of the worlds creation (*Rom*. 1. 20.) The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternall power and God-head; so we may say on the other side, The invisible things of him from the confusions which are in the world, are clearly seen; or they

Mons in Burgundia a proximo monte desciscens, vallesq; proximas coardans, multas agriculturalum villas oppressit &c.

Overnerus in fasciculo Josephus' Ant. l. 9. c. 12.

Vide Senecam, l. 5. c. 15. et l. Quo. Natur.

Plinium Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 3.

Cum in agro Mutinensi montes duo inter se concurrebant, pitu maximo affluentes, &c. Eo concursu villae omnes elise sunt, &c.

they may be understood by the things which are removed and changed, in these you may read his eternall power and God-head. When God breaks the laws and course of nature, he shews his power as well as when he settled the Laws and course of nature. He shews his power when he lets the sea out of its place to overflow the earth, as well as when he bounded the sea, that it shall not overflow the earth. Some things are with far less power destroyed then made, removed then settled; but no power can destroy the world, but that which made it, or suddenly remove a mountain, but that which settled it. The power of God must be acknowledged in altering as well as in ordering the naturall course or constitution of the creature.

And if we look to the change of Metaphoricall mountains it is a truth, an illustrious truth, that the Lord displayes his mighty power, in removing and over-turning the great estates and establishments of men or kingdoms. When God removes the mountain of our peace, of our riches, the mountain of outward prosperity and of civill power, it becomes us to say, *He is mighty in power, who doth all these things.*

God hath given us great tokens and testimonies of his power in this. How many mountains, great mountains, men who were mountains, and things which stood like mountains in our way, how many (I say) of these hath the Lord removed? Our eyes have seen mountains removing, and mighty hills melting: the power of God and the faith of his people have wrought such miracles in our dayes, *He removeth the mountains.*

And they know it not.

They, who? who or what is the antecedent to this, *They?* are the mountains? So some understand it, and then the word *know*, or the act of *knowing* is by a figure ascribed (as many times in Scripture to creatures without reason, so) to creatures without life, *Psal. 58. 8. before your pots can feel the thorns;* the Hebrew is, before your pots can understand or know the thorns, that is, before they are sensible of the heat of the fire to make them boyl, &c. An act of sense, and is ascribed to pots, which are things insensible.

Nesciunt, scilicet, tribuitur rei inanimatae sensus. Merc.

But others take the antecedent to be *man*, *He removeth the mountains, and they know it not;* that is, men know it not. So Master Broughton translates, *He removeth the mountains that*

Puto esse modum loquendi indeterminatum, cui suppletur est subiectum mines. Bold.

men cannot mark how he hath removed them out of their place in his anger.

*Variablis sup-
positum verbi
nescierunt, ita
supplet, nec ag-
noscunt (sc. ho-
mines imperiti)
qui subvertit
eos furore suo.*

*Locus sive ab
arte, sive à na-
tura munitus,
reddit homines
ab omni bello
rum aut ruinae
suspicionem secu-
ros. Sanct.*

Supposing men to be the antecedent, there is yet a difference about the interpretation. Men, that is, say some, unskillfull men, ignorant men, they know not the meaning of this, they cannot, give a reason why or how mountains are removed; if God doth it *they know it not*. Others restrain it to men, inhabiting the mountains, they were secure, and thought their dealings so safe, that God removed their mountain before they dream'd of, much less feared any such thing; they had no thought that God would remove their mountain. Places strongly fortified either by art or nature, make men secure, and dangers unsuspected. The deluge in Noahs time prevailed over the highest mountains; but his sinfull posterity hoped to make an artificiall mountain, wherein they might even dare a second deluge. *Come let us build us a City and a Tower, whose top may reach to heaven* (Gen 11.4.) and then (except the stars and firmament be flouded) we shall be dry, how much or how long so ever it rains. Such towering thoughts, as these, were (surely) laid in the foundation of that intended Tower.

Take the text either of naturall or of figurative mountains, and to remove them, so, that man knows it not, may have a double meaning.

First, that it is done with great speed.

Secondly, That it is done with great secrecie.

God is able to do great things in a little time, in so little time that men shall not know he is doing them, till they are done. He can do great things secretly, so secretly, that the way of their dispatch shall not be visible to the eye, or open to the understanding of men, till they are dispatcht.

Again, this clause [*And they know it not*] notes not only the security of men before the hand of God is upon them, but their stupidity, while it is upon them. So (Pro. 23.35.) *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*; the Hebrew is, *and I knew it not*. Hence observe,

The works and judgements of Gad, are often unsuspected and unobserved by men.

He removeth mountains, even their mountains, and they know it not.

'Tis true in reference to naturall, but especially to civill mountains. The rich, the mighty are cast down from their seats, or their seats

seats are cast down before they saw any hand touching them; the whore of Babylon, and mother of fornications, who sits upon seven mountains (Rev. 17.9.) saith in her heart, *I sit a queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*, (Rev. 18.7.) *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, &c.* (ver. 8.) If her plagues come in a day, she (doubtless) thought not of them a day before. *Babylons seven mountains* shall be removed, she not knowing it; and as *Babylons mountains* shall be removed, when she shall not know, that is, suspect it; so, which is more strange, *Jerusalems mountain* was removed, and she did not know, that is, perceive it. The Prophets are expresse (Isa. 42.25.) *Therefore he hath poured upon him (namely, Jacob or Israel) the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel, and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* They were unobservant of those terrible things the Lord did among them. Some little anger passes often without notice, but here was the *fury of anger*; some slight skirmishes make no great noise, but here was the *strength of battel*; and not some few drops of both these, but either of them poured upon him by whole bucket-fuls, and these buckets of burning fury set him on fire, and that not in some one corner or out-house, but round about, yet he *knew it not*. Which is expounded in the next words *It burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*

The Prophet Hosea (Chap. 7.9.) speaks as much of *Jerusalem* under the name of *Ephraim*, *Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.* Strangers devour his strength, that is, according to the language of *Job*, the mountains wherein his strength did consist, were devoured and overthrown by strangers, and yet he knew it not, he did not observe the hand of God in the hand of man against him. *Gray hairs are here and there upon him*; gray hairs are a great change; gray hairs note the most discernable change of a mans life. There are two states of a man, easily distinguished, Youth, & Old-age, and gray hairs make the most visible distinction between these two; so that to say, *Gray hairs are upon him*, is to say there is such a change upon his estate, as is between a young man and an old man, and yet he knows, he observes it not. Of all things a man is most apt to take notice of his own natural gray hairs: and many are so troubled at the first sight of them (because they tell us we begin to be old) that they will pick them out; but such

is the senselessness of many about the dealings of God with them, that when great changes are upon them, changes like that of youth into old-age, they are not affected with it; providentiall or judiciary gray hairs are not often known.

Surely many of these gray hairs are upon us at this day: it will be sad if *England*, be like *Ephraim*, and know it not. It is worse not to know we have gray hairs, Then have them. The one is but our affliction, the other is our sin. Gray hairs are upon us, strangers have devoured our strength. As many oppressing mountains are removed (for which we ought to bless God, and admire his power) so some supporting mountains have been removed, and others shake terribly, for which we ought to mourn, and be humbled under the mighty hand of God. If we know not what God hath done; he can quickly doe enough to make himself known. *They who will not see the hand of God, when it is lifted up (that they may be humbled) shall see it, and be ashamed (Isa. 26. 11.)* if the removing and shaking of our mountains doe not awaken us, the overturning of them shall; That's the next act of divine power in this noble description.

And overturneth them in his anger.

וַיִּפֹּט
Vertit, subvertit significat
versionem, vel
in nihilum, vel
in formam, aut
qualitatem aliam,
vel in locum alium.

The word signifies to over-turn a thing, so, as to change the form and fashion of it, yea, to bring it to nothing; not only to remove a thing out of its place, but to take away the very being of it, and to remove it out of the world. He not only turns mountains into mole-hills, but into plains, yea into pits, they shall not be mountains any longer, nor any thing like a mountain.

It is much to remove a mountain, and set it in another place: but more to crumble it in a moment all to dust, that you shall not finde a peice or a clod of it. The prophet threatens the obstinate Jews in such a language, (*Isa. 30. 13, 14.*) *Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant, and he shall break it as the breaking of the Potters vessel, &c. So that there shall not be found in the bursting of it, a sheard to take fire from the earth, or to take water withall out of the pit.*

He overturneth them in his anger.

Anger in man is a mixt affection made up chiefly of these two ingredients, sorrow and revenge. Some call anger the boiling of the bloud

bloud about the heart, or the boiling of the heart in bloud; The fumes whereof rise so fast into the brain, that anger sometimes lodges reason, and is therefore called by others a *short madness*.

The word in the text signifies the *Nostrils*; and the Scripture frequently applies that to anger, because anger is seen and made visible in the nostrils. Quick breathing is a sign of anger. God is without parts and passions, he is not angry as man; but is said to be angry when he doth like man in his anger. The Lord is not moved or stirred by anger, but he is angry, when he makes motions & stirrings in the creature; he lets out the effects of anger, but himself hath not the affection, much less the perturbation of anger. Hence observe,

That the troubles and confusions which are in the creature, are tokens and effects of the anger of God.

As the setting and establishment of the creature, is an effect or sign of his goodness, or as these tell us, that God is pleased: So when the Lord hurles the creature this way and that way, when he tosses it up and down, as if he cared not how, this is an argument of his anger. When *Moses* came down from the mount, and saw what the people of *Israel* had done, how they made a golden calf and polluted themselves with idols, such a passion of anger came upon him, that he threw the Tables of the Law out of his hand, and break them. So, when the Lord would signifie his displeasure, he throws the creature out of his hand, and breaks man against man, Nation against Nation (as a potters vessel) one against another. The comfort and well-being of the creature, consist in this, that God holds it in his hand; if he do but let it goe out of his hand it perishes, much more when he casts it with violence out of his hand. The Prophet (*Hab. 3. 8.*) describing the great confusions which God made in the world, questions thus, *Was thine anger against the rivers? Was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses, and thy chariots of salvation?* God being angry with the enemies of his people, made strange work amongst them; *Rather then his people shall not be delivered, the world shall be confounded: Was the Lord angry with the sea?* when he compelled the rivers to change their courses, and discover the bottome of their channels, as in the passage of his *Israel* thorow the red sea? No, God was not angry with the sea, but with *Pharaoh* and his host, with the oppressours and troublers of his *Israel*; and when he was thus angry, he check'd the course of nature, and turned things up-side-down. When *David* was in a distress, and his

Ira furor brevis

EN

Ira, inde transfertur ad nasum, qui est instrumentum irae, & in quo ira precipue apparet. Fames & morabilem in nasum concitunt.
Plaut.

enemies.

Tanta extitit
divina ira ut
pro Davide
cont. a hostes
defendendo, ut
videbatur
tem. invertere,
omnia misere.
&c. Pined.

enemies encompass him round about: what then? *Then the earth shook and trembled, the foundations of the hills were moved and were shaken, because he was wrath (Psal. 18.7.)* That, God might rescue David out of the hand of trouble, he troubled the foundations of the earth; he made the world shake and Kingdoms tremble, that his David might be settled upon his throne. The Lord threatneth (Hag. 2.6.) that he will shake the heaven and the earth, and the sea and the dry land; he will move all creatures, why so? He shakes them for the settling of his Zion (verse. 7.) *I will shake all Nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.* When the Lord comes against the superstition, and idolatry, and profaneness, and wickednesses of the world in anger, no wonder if kingdoms shake: yea, he therefore shakes kingdoms, that he may establish Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken, Isa. 33.20. We are waiting when God will shake Babylon, and in his anger overturn the seven mountains thereof. Babylon is built upon mountains, upon seven mountains, to note the strength and power of it, yet the Lord will remove Babylon out of her place, and overturn those mountains in the fierceness of his anger, and in jealousy poured out, *Then every Island shall flee away, and the mountains shall not be found, Rev. 16.20.* That is, the remotest and strongest places which owned and maintained Babylon, shall either be converted or confounded, they shall appear no more under that spirituall notion, though in a naturall and civill they doe remain. *That which is not as it was, is spoken of, as if it were not: A great change in our condition, is called a change of our very being.* The anger of God overturns things, as if it did annihilate them. Job goes on.

Verse 6. *Which shakes the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.*

This is the second instance, but in higher expressions of the same power of God.

ὁ σεισθῆναι τὴν
ἐρασαν ἐκ. ε.
μελιων i. e.
terrem univ. ver.
sam Sept.

Which shakes the earth out of her place.

He had said before, God removeth mountains. Mountains are great bulky bodies, but no mountain is so great as the Globe of the whole earth. Now (saith he) the Lord doth not only shake mountains,

mountains, some great parts of the earth, but if he please he can take up the whole earth, and throw it out of its place, as a man would take up a little ball, and throw it into the air, *He shakes the earth out of her place.*

The word which we translate to *shake*, signifies a violent motion of the minde, caused either by fear (*Deut. 2. 25.*) or grief (*2 Sam. 18. 33.*) We read of a trembling heart from both (*Deut. 28. 25.*) It is also applied to civill shakings and commotions by the troublesome spirits of men (*Prov. 30. 21.*) *For three things the earth is disquieted.* And to unnaturall shakings of the earth by the power of God (*2 Sam. 22. 8, &c.*) So in the text.

Some expound this of a natural motion. Those men have (surely) a motion and turning in their brains, who tell us that there is a continued motion of the earth, that it turns and never stands still, they would ground the motion of the earth upon this Scripture, translating thus, *Which moveth the earth in her place.* But the text tells us, that the earth hath pillars, and not wheels. Pillars are made for rest, not for motion.

Further, This text speaks of it, as of an act of Gods anger, therefore no ordinary act appointed in nature; and the word notes a violent motion, not a natural. But we need not stand to refute this motion. As when some denied all motion, a Philosopher to prove it, rose up and walked: So when any affirm or give reason for this motion, we may shew their senses that the earth stands.

This shaking then is extraordinary, the Lord who made the earth firm upon pillars, can make the earth move, as if it went on wheels.

This he doth, first, by earthquakes, these shake the earth (as it were) out of her place, and make it tremble. Histories are full, and many mens experience can give instances of such terrible shakings of the earth. This earthquake is not meant here, for there is a reason in nature for that. Philosophers dispute much about it, and tell us, when there is a strong vapour included or imprisoned in the bowels of the earth, that vapour seeking vent maketh a combustion there, and so the earth shakes. This, indeed, shews the mighty power of God, but it is in a naturall way, whereas the text seems to imply somewhat more, somewhat beyond the learning of Philosophers and Naturalists.

Besides, the text saith,

He

137
Non significat
motum natura-
lem, sed com-
motionem
quandam ex
metu, trepidationem, tremorem.
Didacm Astu-
nica putat hunc
locum illustrari
passo ex sen-
tentia Pyth go-
ricorum, ex sti-
mantium ter-
ram moveri
natura sua.
Copernicus.

He shaketh the earth [out] of her place.

Whereas an earthquake shakes the earth in her place, and causes it to tremble upon the pillars thereof.

*Terrificam ca-
pitis concussit
terq; quater-
que; Cæsariem
cum qua ter-
ram mare
sidera movit.
Ovid. met.*

But did God ever shake the earth out of her place? We must understand the text conditionally. We have not any instance that the Lord hath actually done so, but this suspicion may be put. The Lord can remove mountains and shake the earth, not only in, but out of her place; We finde such conditionall expressions often put in Scripture, not as if the things ever had been, or ever should be done, but if the Lord will, he is able to doe them (*Amos 9.5.*) *The Lord God of Hosts is he that toucheth the Land, and it shall melt;* that is, if the Lord doe but touch the land he can melt it. As the three children cast into a fiery furnace, had not so much as a garment, or a thread about them touched with it, because the Lord forbad the fire to burn: So, if the Lord bid a spark but touch us, it shall melt and consume us, as if we were cast into and continued in a fiery furnace. As a word made, so a touch shall mar the world, when God will; yet he hath not done thus unto this day. So in the text, *He shakes the earth out of her place*, imports what God can, not what he hath or will do. Note from it,

That the Lord is able to doe greater things, then ever he actually hath done.

He hath not put the earth out of her place, the earth is where it was, but he can displace it. God hath never acted any of his attributes to the height, for they are infinite; he never acted power so high, but he is able to act it higher: He hath never acted mercy in pardoning so far, but he is able to act it further; a greater sinner then ever yet was pardoned, may be pardoned. A greater enemy then ever was overcome, may be overcome. He hath run with foot-men, and they have not wearied him, and he is able to contend with horses: in a land of peace he was never wearied ~~him~~, and he knows how to wade thorow the swellings of *Jordan*. It is comfortable to consider, that the Lord cannot only do the same things again, which he hath done, but he hath never done to the utmost of what he is able to doe: he can out-doe all that he hath done, as much as the shaking of the whole earth out of her place, is more, then to remove a mountain, yea, or a mole-hill of earth.

And

And the pillars thereof tremble.

We have *the pillars of heaven*, Chap. 26. 11. *here of the earth.*

The pillars.

עמך

The word in the original signifies to stand upright, to be erect, because pillars do so. There are two sorts of pillars, upon which there is a different interpretation of the word. *Columna erecta, a stando dicta.*

There are, first, *Supporting pillars.* And

Secondly, *Supported pillars.* Or, there are *pillars for ornament*; and *pillars for strength.* We set up pillars or pinacles upon the tops of great buildings for ornament, and they are supported pillars. We may call mountains such pillars: for, as when some stately palace is built, great pillars or pinacles are set upon the towers and battlements: so the Lord having framed the earth, hath set up mountains, as great pillars for the adorning of it, *He shaketh the earth, and the pillars thereof tremble*; it is true of these upper pillars, the mountains they tremble. But I take it rather to be meant of supporting pillars, under-pillars, which bear the frame above, and are as the bases or under-props of the earth (*Psal. 105.*) *Who laid the foundation of the earth*; the earth hath a foundation; the Hebrew is, *He hath founded the earth upon her Basis*, alluding to a building. Most buildings have their foundations in the earth; but some upon it, being raised upon pillars. So *Hannah* (1 Sam. 2. 8.) in her Song, *the pillars of the earth are the Lords, and he hath set the world upon them.*

What are these pillars that the Lord hath set the world upon? or where shall we find them?

David shews us (*Psal. 24. 1, 2.*) *The earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein*; for he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. It is strange that pillars of liquid water should bear up the massie earth, the earth seems rather to be the pillar and foundation of the waters. Some interpret (*super*) which signifies, upon, by *prope* or *juxta*, near, he hath founded it upon the seas, that is, he hath founded it by, or near the seas. But take it in the letter, and it is a truth: for the sea is as much the pillar of the earth, as the earth is the pillar of the sea; earth and sea being a globe and round, the Sea is as much under the earth, as the earth is under the sea. Thus the pillars of the earth are waters, *And the earth is established upon the floods.*

B b

Further,

Further, If you would know what these pillars are, hear what Job saith, (*Chap. 26. 7.*) where he assures us that God *hangeth the earth upon nothing*. We are not to think that the Lord in framing and building the earth did first set up pillars, and then set the earth upon them, for the earth hangeth as a ball in the midst of the air, without any pillars under it. Hence Job's Philosophy teaches us, *That he hangeth the earth upon nothing*; there are no material or visible pillars to sustain it.

What is then the pillar of the earth? What is it that supports and bears it up? *The reall pillar of the earth is the power of God*. But the power of God cannot tremble? how then doth he say, *When he shaketh the earth, the pillars thereof tremble*?

*Terræ colum-
ne, infimas ter-
ræ partes sig-
nificant, quæ
et reliquam terræ
molem impossi-
tam sustinent;
hæc sunt velu-
ti fundamenta
et fulcræ terræ.*

In this place therefore we may expound the pillars of the earth, for the lower parts of the earth, and so, though the whole globe of the earth taken together be neither higher nor lower, yet in the parts of it from any point, some are higher, and some are lower, some above and some beneath; upon what superficies soever we are, the under parts thereof are (to us) the pillars of the earth. So the meaning is, *He shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble*; that is, he shaketh it so terribly, that if it had any outward visible pillars, those pillars must needs tremble.

*Quo pacto ter-
ra firma et im-
mota consistit?
quidnam pro-
vehit uilo ha-
bet? cujus rei
ad miniculo ful-
citur? rationi
nihil occurrit
cui innitatur,
si divinam vo-
luntatem exce-
peris. Greg.
Nazianz Ora.
34
Suis lib. a
ponderibus fixa
manet.*

In this we may observe the great power of God in upholding the earth. We see what the pillars of the earth are, the supposed pillars are no other then the lower parts of the earth; and the true pillar of the earth is no other, but the power of God: there are no other buttresses or pillars upon which the earth is set, or by which it is sustained; this huge weight of the whole earth and seas, is borne up by the thin air. Is not this an argument of the mighty power of God, that the air which is a body so weak, that if you throw a feather up into it it will not stay there, but descend, yet the whole mass or globe of the earth and waters hang there? God poiseeth it meerly by its own weight: *For he weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in ballances*, Isa. 40. 12. He upholds all things by the word of his power, *And hath built this great Castle in the air*. Could we enter into the secrets of nature, and set our faith awork by our senses about these things, we should be raised above all fear in the greatest difficulties. If we saw but a bullet, or a piece of lead of a pound, yea of a penny weight, lifted up and hang in the air without any thing to support it, we would conclude it a miracle. What think you when all the lead, and iron,

and

and brasse, and stone that is in the world, hang in the air without any visible stay?

I find some interpreting this clause as the former, in a figurative sense, *He shaketh the earth*, that is, States, Kingdoms, and Common-wealths; *And the pillars thereof tremble*; that is, they who seemed to be their strongest supporters tremble and shake. This is a truth, and a profitable one for our meditation. To clear this,

First, We find the earth in Scripture often put for States and Kingdoms (Isa. 24.20.) *The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall and not rise again.* The earth shall do this: what earth? He doth not mean the natural earth upon which men tread, but the people who tread upon the earth, or that Common-wealth, wherein people are united and governed, these shall reel to and fro, and be removed like a cottage: as if he had said, you thought your State and Kingdom was settled like a strong Castle, but I will take it down, as a man takes down a little cottage, raddl'd only with a few sticks and reeds. Or the meaning of it is, your Common-wealth that hath been founded by the wisdom of so many Law-givers, and is established in so much riches and power, shall be removed as a poor cottage, thorow which every puff of wind findes a passage. The strongest Kingdoms and Bulwarks of the earth, are but as thatcht cottages, when God takes them in hand. *Fundavit legibus urbes.*

Secondly, Pillars are as often taken in a political sense, *Psal. 75.3. The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved.* How comes it then to pass that they are not utterly destroyed? it follows, *I bear up the pillars of it*; that is, I maintain Governours and Magistrates, some in places of power and authority, by whom shaking, tottering Kingdoms are upheld. Our experience teaches us this; We live in a Nation, of which we may say, *Our earth with the inhabitants thereof are dissolved*, we are a broken and a shattered people; yet the Lord bears up our Pillar, *the Parliament, the polittick pillar of our Nation*; we had long ago lain in the dust, if God had not borne up this pillar. The chief counsels of the adversary have been to weaken and undermine, to ruine and pull down this pillar: They (like *Sampson*) have taken hold of our two pillars and bowed themselves with all their might (*Judg. 16.28.*) but neither have they proved *Sampsons*, nor proved us *Philistines*.

De domo vtriusq;
domus.

Further, There are *Church-pillars* as well as *State-pillars*; men of eminency in knowledge and learning, in parts and piety; these are pillars of the Church of God. So the Apostle calls *James* and *Peter*, Gal. 2.9. As the church it self is the *pillar of truth*: so some particular members are *pillars of truth*, bearing it up, and holding it forth, as pillars do the *Laws* or *Edicts* of Princes and *Common-wealths*. As these Pillars are of Gods setting up, so of Gods bearing up. In great shakings of the earth *Common-wealth-pillars* tremble, and *Church-pillars* tremble, yea they would fall did not the Lord sustain them with his hand.

From all, learn the instability of the creature. If that which is the basis or foundation of all outward comforts be so easily shaken and tost up and down, what are the comforts themselves? If *Kingdoms* and *Common-wealths* totter, who can stand fast? When the Saints feel the world shake and tremble under them, their comfort is, *They have received a kingdom that cannot be shaken*. Neither men nor devils have any power to shake it, and God will not shake it: nay, with reverence we may speak it, the Lord cannot shake that Kingdome, for it is his own: he cannot doe any thing to his own wrong or dishonour. Earth may, but Heaven shakes not, neither shall any of the pillars thereof tremble for ever.

We have seen two acts of the mighty power of God; first in removing those mountains, those great massie parts of the earth. Secondly, In shaking the whole masse of the earth.

Now the thoughts of *Job* grow higher, and he ascends from earth to heaven, and brings an instance of the power of God there, in the 7th verse.

Verse 7. Which commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not, and sealeth up the stars.

Sicut de natura
terra est im-
mobilitas &
quies, ita de
naturâ celi,
ut semper mo-
veatur. Aquin.

And the instance which he makes in the heaven, stands (as heaven doth to earth) in a direct line of opposition to that which he gave about the earth. The earth in all the parts of it, is a settled, fixed body, and therefore the power of God is clearly seen in causing it to move: but, the Sun is a moveable body, a creature in continual motion; and therefore the power of God is clearly seen in checking and stopping the motion of it. It calls for as strong a hand to make the Sun stand still, as to shake and remove the earth. The staying of that which naturally cannot but move, and

and the moving of that which naturally cannot but stand still, require a like power: and that which stands as the earth doth, or moves as the sun doth, requires an Almighty power to move or stay it.

Which commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not.

Which commandeth the Sun.] He describes God in the posture and language of a King, giving out commands, *He commandeth, God is the Sovereign of the Sun.* Yet the word in the Hebrew is no more, but *he saith, or he speaks to the Sun*; so Mr. Broughton translates, *He speaks to the Sun that it riseth not*; We, clearly to the sense, *He commandeth the Sun*, Because the Word of God to the creature, is a Law or a Command upon the creature.

7821
Dixit, illud dicere est cum potestate imperandi.

He commandeth the Sun and it riseth not.

The phrase implies an ordinary, or a common event. But when was there such a thing as this? How rare are such events? I may ask, Did the Lord ever command the Sun that it should not rise? Or did ever any day appear, when the Sun did not appear? we may answer four or five ways.

First, Some conceive *Job* speaks of what God can do (as in the former instance) not of what he ever did: He never actually gave out his command to the Sun that it should not rise, but he hath power to do it, if he pleaseth. Many things are spoken of the power of God as presently done, which only are things possible for him to do. That's a good interpretation of the place.

Non ad factum, sed ad Dei potentiam refertur, qui, si velit, possit vicissitudinem ortus & occasus solis tollere.
Olymp.

Secondly, We may carry it further, for when he saith, *It riseth not*, we need not take it strictly, as if the Sun were staid from making day at all; but, it may note any stop or sudden disappearing of the Sun. The Sun's rising is the Sun's appearing; and when the Sun disappeareth, or is hidden, it is to us, as if the Sun were not risen. Thus God hath actually more then once, given out a command to the Sun, not to rise. *Lavater* (in his comment upon this place) reports that in the year 1585. March. 12th, such a darkness fell upon the earth, that the fowles went to roost at noon, as if it had been Sun setting, and all the common people thought the day of judgement was come. That of the Prophet is true in the letter, as well as in the figure (Amos. 4. 13.) *He maketh the morning darkness*: And (Chap. 5. 8.) *He turneth the shadow of death*

Non oritur sol, tantum est non apparet, nam et ortus solis apparitio quædam est. Bold.

death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night. The holy story, records one famous act of God commanding the Sun to stand still (*Josh. 10.12.*) When *Joshua* was in pursuit of his enemies, he prayed that the day might not hasten down : *Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon, And the Sun stood still, &c.* *Joshua* speaks as if himself could command the Sun, *Sun, stand thou still* ; he talks to the Sun, as to his servant, or child, *stand still*. It was indeed at the voice of *Joshua*, but by the word and power of God, that the Sun stood still. So the Text resolves, *There was no day like that before it, or after it* (no day so long as that) *that the Lord hearkned to the voice of a man*. So then, the Lord hearkned to the voice of a man, and then the Sun hearkned to the voice of a man : First, the Lord hearkned, and then the Sun hearkned, that is, by a command from God at the request of a man the Sun stood still.

*Dionysius are-
pogita.*

Thirdly, It may be understood of ordinary eclipses, which are disappearings of the Sun : And though they come in a course of nature, and are by natural light fore-seen many years before they come, yet there is somewhat in them, which should fill us with high thoughts of the power of God. And though an eclipse of the Sun be no miracle, yet God once made, and can again make a miraculous eclipse. When Christ the *Sun of righteousness* was shamefully crucified, the Sun in the heavens (as ashamed to look upon that act (as from man) of prodigious cruelty and injustice) hid his face ; and from the sixth houre (that is, from high-noon) there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth houre ; that is, till three in the afternoon, *Math. 27.45*. The eclipse was miraculous ; first, because it was the full of the moon. Which (as we receive from *Antiquity*) caused a great Philosopher (not knowing what was doing, or who was suffering at *Jerusalem*) to cry out *Either the God of nature suffers, or the frame of nature dissolves*.

2. Because it was universall (as some affirm) over all the world, or as others (which makes it more strange) that it was only in the land of *Judea*, all the world besides enjoying the light of the Sun at that time. Which miracle stands opposite to that in *Egypt*, which was plagued with darkness, when the *Israelites* in *Goshen* enjoyed light ; whereas then *Judea* where the *Israelites* dwelt, was covered with darkness, the rest of the world enjoying light.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Some refer this speech of *Jobs* to that particular plague of darkness, for three dayes in *Egypt* (last mentioned) which they conceive was then fresh in memory, and so *Job* had reference especially unto that, when he saith, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not*. For though God at that time did not give a command to stop the Sun from rising upon all parts of the earth, yet he commandeth the Sun not to rise upon that part; when his own people had light in *Goshen*, the Lord charged the Sun not to rise upon the *Egyptians*; this is a more distinct act of the power of God. For, as he speaks, *Amos* 4. 7. (to note the accurateness as well as the power of God in his judgments) concerning the rain, *I commanded the clouds* (saith he) *and I caused it to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City*: So the Lord can cause the Sun, if he please, to rise upon one Country, and not upon another; upon one Nation, and not upon another; upon one City, and not upon another. Thus we may understand it, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not* upon one people, though it shineth upon others, according to the manner of that *Egyptian* plague.

Lastly, We may interpret it of any extraordinary tempestuous time, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not*; that is, he makes such storms and tempests, and causeth such vapours and clouds in the air, that the Sun is muffled up, and is as if it did not rise. Such a day (he means it of any troubles and afflictions) we have described in the Prophet *Joel* (Chap. 2. 2.) *A day of darkness, and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thicke darkness, as the morning upon the mountains*. But how is a day of darkness as the morning? &c. The speech intends thus much, that this darkness shall spread it self as suddenly as the morning light spreads it self upon the mountains, which being highest, are blest and gilded with the first issuing rayes of the rising Sun. God is said to command the Sun not to rise, when he vails and masks the face of the Sun with suddain clouds, as if there were no Sun at all but clouds. *Paul* in his voyage to *Rome*, was under such a tempest, and the Text saith, *That neither Sun nor Star for many dayes appeared* (*Acts* 27. 20.) they were as if the Sun had not risen for many dayes. Such stormy gloomy weather God can make, (*Ezek.* 32. 7.) *When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark, I will cover the Sun with a cloud*; that is, I will put a black vail or cloak upon the heavens, that the Sun shall not
put

put out any light when I put them out; when I extinguish thee I will (for a time) extinguish the Sun also. The constellations of Heaven are often expressed sympathizing with the dispensations of God on earth, *Isa. 13. 10. Joel 2. 31. Mat. 24. 29. He commandeth or speaketh to the Sun.* Observe hence,

First, *The bare word of God is a command.*

Os in Scriptura pro voluntate saepe accipitur, significat enim locutionem, locutione enim homines quid volunt manifestant.
πρὸς τὴν ὁμιλίαν.

He speaketh to the Sun, and it riseth not. The Apostle useth that word about the creation of light, *2 Cor. 4. 6. The Lord who commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts:* the Greek is, *The Lord who spake light out of darkness,* which we translate, *The Lord who commanded the light out of darkness.* The words of God are Laws, and therefore the *ten Commandements*, that part of the word which carries the name of commands from all the rest, is yet called, *The ten words of God.* The Greeks call the ten Commandements, the *Decalogue*, or the *ten words*; so many words, so many commands. The devil seems to acknowledge this great power of God (only that he might abuse it) in Christ, that his word was a command, *If thou be the Son of God (Mat. 4. 3.) command that these stones be made bread:* The Greek is, *If thou be the Son of God speak to these stones that they become bread, or speak these stones into bread:* He would take that as a proof of his Divinity, *If thou be the Son of God, do this;* God can do this, his Word is a command to all creatures, for whatsoever he imposeth upon them, they must submit to it, therefore do thou so likewise, speak to these stones, or command these stones to become bread.

It should be matter of comfort to us, while we remember that every word of God is a command upon all creatures, *He hath made a decree which shall not pass (Psal. 148. 6.)* The Hebrew is only, a word which shall not pass, his word is a decree, which none shall reverse.

Secondly, As from the former clause [*He commandeth the Sun*] we learn, that every word of God is a command: so from that which followeth [*and it riseth not*] We may learn.

That, every creature obeys the command, and submits to the will of God.

Men often speak, and speak in the highest language of commanding, and yet the thing is not done; but whatsoever the Lord speaks is done. Every thing hath an ear to hear his voice, who made both voice and ear, *Psal. 148. 8. Fire and hail, snow and vapour,*

pour, stormy winds fulfilling his Word. Senseless creatures act at Gods command, and goe upon his errand, *They fulfill his Word.* The Lord sent a message unto *Hezekiah*, to assure him that his sickness was at his command, because the Sun was, (*2 Kings 20. 9, 10.*) *Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or goe backward ten degrees in the diall of Ahaz?* either way (saith the Lord) I can doe it either way, as thou shalt ask a sign, it shall be done. And *Hezekiah* answered, *It is a light thing for the shadow to goe down ten degrees, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees.* Yet he knew the Lord did not offer him a light thing in either, when he said, *Shall the Sun goe forward or backward.* The Suns going forward was within a degree, as great a matter as it's going backward; but *Hezekiah* calls it a light matter, in regard of common apprehension and observation. The Suns motion is naturally forward, and though it should mend it's pace, many would not much regard it; but all would stand and wonder at a retrograde motion, or at the Sun going backward. Hence *Hezekiah* calls it a light matter for the Sun to goe forward comparatively to it's going backward. And from either the Lord would teach *Hezekiah*, that the creatures will doe what he bids them, even the Sun will move miraculously at his Word. How great a rebuke will it be to man, if he move not at the command of God, and as God commands? Shall the Lord say to the Sun, *Rise not,* and it riseth not; and shall he say to man, *Swear not,* and he will swear; pray, and he will not pray: shall the Lord have better obedience from creatures without life then from man, who hath not only life but reason? or from Saints, who have not only reason, but grace? They who have grace give not such universal obedience as things without life: for though there be a part in them active to obey, yet there is a part in them backward to all obedience. Let it shame us that there should be any thing in us (who have life, reason, and grace) (relisting; or not readily complying with all the commands of God, when the Sun, which hath not so much as life, obeyes his voice, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not.*

Thirdly; Observe from the manner of this speech.

That, The Lord hath a negative voice upon the motion of all creatures.

He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not. It is a royall Prerogative that the Lord commands the Sun to rise, but that the

Lord hath a power to stay the Sun from rising, lifts up his Prerogative to the highest. In all disputes about power, his is resolved to be greatest, who hath the negative voice, which checks and superseats all others. This is the Prerogative of God; he can stay the motion of the Sun, and of man. The Sun dares not do his office to the day, nor the stars to the night, if the Lord say, No. The Sun is described, *Psal. 19. 5.* like a bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, drest and prepared, and as a Giant rejoycing to run his race; but though the Sun be thus prepared, and drest, and ready, yet if the Lord send a writ, and prohibition to the Sun to keep within his chamber, he cannot come forth, his journey is stopt. Thus also he stops man in his nearest preparations for any action. *If the Lord shall work, who shall let it? Isa. 43. 13.* That is, there is no power in heaven or earth which can hinder him. But if the Lord will let, who shall work? neither Sun, nor stars, nor men, nor devils can work, if he forbid them. The point is full of Comfort. God tels *Abimelech* in the case of *Sarah*, *Abrahams* wife, whom he took into his house, *I know that thou didst it in the Integrity of thy heart, but I with-held thee, and I suffered thee not to touch her* (*Gen. 20. 6.*) And when *Laban* pursued *Jacob* with hard thoughts against him, and strong resolutions to deal harshly with him; The Lord gave a negative voice, (*Gen. 31. 24.*) *Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.* *Laban* had not the use of his own tongue; *He could not speake either good or bad.* Not good or bad! Was there any hurt for *Laban* to speak good to *Jacob*? And the story tells us, that *Laban* spake many words, and some bad enough to *Jacob*, charging him with double theft. First, for stealing himself away (*vers. 27.*) *Wherefore didst thou steal away from me?* Secondly, for stealing his Idols (*vers. 30.*) *And now though thou wouldest needs be gone, because thou longest sore after thy fathers house, yet wherefore hast thou stoln away my Gods?* Foul language all, though God charged him not to speak a bad word to *Jacob*. For answer know, We must restrain that restraint to the point of bringing *Jacob* back again, *Thou shalt not speak either good or bad to him,* to stop or turn him from his way, thou shalt use no threatnings to bring him back to thee, no, nor any promises or allurements: thou shalt make no offers of better entertainment to win him to thy service, which was the thing he so much desired. Good and bad are the two terms of all that can be spoken, and where the utmost extremes of speaking are forbidden, all speaking to that purpose is forbidden.

forbidden. When the ancient people of God were few in number, yea, very few, and strangers in the land, when they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdome to another people, one would think, that all the world would have been upon them; but here was their protection, God had a negative voice (*Pfal. 105. 15.*) *He suffered no man to doe them wrong.* Many had (as we say) an aking tooth at the people of God, their fingers itcht to be dealing with them, and the text shews four advantages the world had against them: First, they were few. Secondly, Very few. Thirdly, Strangers. Fourthly, Unsettled. What hindered their enemies? It was the Lords negative voice. *He reprov'd Kings for their sake, saying, Touch not mine anointed, and doe my prophets no harm.* We see an instance of this (*Gen. 35. 5.*) when *Jacob* and his family journeyed, the terrour of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of *Jacob*: they had a minde to pursue after them, to revenge the slaughter of the *Sichemites*, but God said *Pursue not*, and then they could not pursue, they must stay at home. And when all his people the *Jews* were safe in *Canaan*, he encourages them to come up freely to worship at *Jerusalem*, by this assurance, No man shall desire thy Land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God, thrice in the year (*Exod. 24. 34.*) God can stop not only hands from spoiling, but hearts from desiring. Our appetite, whether concupiscible or irascible, is under his command, as well as our actions. The Prophet asserts this by way of question (*Lam. 3. 37.*) *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?* That is, if the Lord doth not concur, if the Lord vote against the saying or command of any man in the world, what he saith shall never come to passe.

We should consider this to help our faith in these times. God hath a negative voice upon those counsels and conclusions, which are carried with one consent of men, *And the wrath of man shall either turn to his praise, or all that is beyond that he will stop, the remainder of wrath*, (namely, so much as remains over and above what turns to the praise of God) *shalt thou restrain*, *Pfal. 76. 6.* The sword is in motion amongst us, even as the Sun, and the sword seemeth to have received a charge to pass from one end of the Land to the other; yet a counter-command from God will stop this sword from going on. If he speak to the sword, the sword shall wound no more. We may entreat the sword to wound no

more, as they (Jer. 47. 6.) cried out, *O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put thy self into thy scabbard, rest and be still.* The answer was, *How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it charge against Askelon? &c.* Our answer might be (changing place) the same, *How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against England?* A word from God draws, and a word from God sheaths the sword. He that commands the Sun, and it riseth not, can command the sword, and it smiteth not, the fire and it burns not, the water and it drowns not, the Lions and they devour not: *How happy are they who serve the Lord over all!*

Observe fourthly, seeing, *He commandeth the Sun and it riseth not,*

That, The daily rising of the Sun, is an act of Grace and favour to the world.

The Sun doth not rise alone of it self, it is the Lord (as we may say) that helps it up every morning. Therefore it is said (Mat. 5. 45.) *He makes his Sun to rise;* His Sun, mark, how Christ speaks of the Sun, as Gods own, that Sun which he can either cause to rise, or not to rise, cause to rise upon one people, and not upon another, *He makes his Sun to rise;* there is an act of common grace in making it to rise upon any, especially in making it to rise upon all, upon the evil, and upon the good, Mat. 5. 41. That God makes the Sun rise to give them light, who use their eyes only to rebell against the light, how admirable is it?

Lastly, As to the speciall aim of Job, we see what a proof we have of the omnipotency of God, *He is great in power, and mighty in strength;* Why, because he can stop the Sun? He that can stay the Sun, what can he not doe? We say to men that attempt impossibilities, *Climb up to the Moon;* it is more to stay the Sun, than to climb the moon. And if the Lord be able to overcome this difficulty, what difficulty can he not overcome? Here's a clear proof of the infinite power and wisdom of God, *He speaks to the Sun, and it riseth not.* And

He sealeth up the stars.

The Sun is the light of the day, the stars the light of the night. *He sealeth up the stars.* Some take it to be a Periphrasis, or a description of night and day, because till the Sun riseth it is night, and when

*Qui efficit no-
stem & diem,
nam donec ori-
tur sol est, non
et adveniente
die, quasi obfig-
nata occultan-
t. a stella. Ju.*

when day appears, the stars are sealed up, or disappear : The Sun riseth, and the stars are obscured, we see them not : So the former clause, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not*, is a description of the night, and this latter, *he sealeth up the stars*, is a description of the day. The plain sense of both being this, *He maketh both night and day*.

Secondly, (say others) This seal is set upon the Sun, in behalf of the stars, *He sealeth up the Sun for the stars* ; that is, in favour of the stars ; that the stars might sometime appear in their lustre and glory to the world ; he keepeth the Sun from appearing.

But (as we translate) we may better keep the seal upon the stars, *He sealeth up the stars*.

Pro stellis signavit (sc. solem) signaculo, quasi in favorem stellarum Deus continet solis splendorem in altero Hemisphere. Cajet.

And so, sealing may import either of these two things.

First, The safe custody of the stars, *He sealeth up the stars* ; that is, he preserveth the stars in their orbs, in the places where he hath set them, they shall never drop out. Sealing is often used for assurance and safe-keeping. *Darius* (Dan. 6.) sealed the stone upon the den of Lions, that so *Daniel* might not be rescued or fetched out from the danger. The Jews, that they might keep Christ fast enough, seal'd the stone of the sepulchre, wherein his body was laid (*Mat. 27.*) And in a spirituall sense, the sealing of the Spirit, is to make the soul safe in the love and favour of God. A soul that is sealed by the Spirit of God, is secured of the love of God, and shall never drop out of his heart. So, *He sealeth up the stars*, is, *He makes the stars firm and fast in their Sphears*. But rather,

Annulos non tam ornatus quam custodia gratia olim inventos dicit. Macrobius l. 7. Saturn. c. 3.

Secondly, Sealing is for secrecie, or for the hiding of a thing from the sight of others : So in the sealing of letters, that they be not seen, and of treasures, that they be not stoln or taken away, *Deut. 32. 34. Job 14. 17.* Thus the Lord seals up the stars, when he clouds or obscures the stars, and will not let them be seen. Some make it an allusion to a book. The heavens are a great volume, wherein many truths of God are written, his name is there ; and the stars are as so many characters or letters of his Name. He often seals up this great volume, and so blots these letters that no man can read or distinguish them.

Clausæ videntur, cum non videntur. Stellæ et omnia cæli lumina, velut characteres quidam efficiunt librum. Pined.

Thirdly, The meaning of, *He sealeth up the stars*, may be taken thus, He keeps in, and closes up the vertue and influences of the stars ; he stops those treasures, which usually come down from the stars upon the earth. Naturall Philosophy teaches us, that all the fatness and fruitfulness of the earth, is conveyed from the heavens.

vens. Heaven nurses and suckles the earth : and if the Lord please he can dry up those breasts, seal up those influences, stop those secret workings which the heavenly bodies have upon the earth. Observe hence,

That the influences of the heavens are in the hand of God, to let them out, or stay them as he pleaseth.

As he can seal up the spirituall treasures of heaven, that the soul shall receive no light, comfort or refreshing from them in Ordinances ; so he seals up the naturall influences of the heavens, that the earth and the fruits of it here below shall receive no quickning, no refreshing from them. And the earth languishes when the Lord suspendeth and sealeth up the naturall influences of heaven, as the soul languisheth, when the Lord stops up the spiritual influences of heaven, when he seals up that star of *Jacob*, that day-star from on high, Jesus Christ.

What we hear of God in natural things ; should keep us in continual dependance upon him for spirituals ; he seals with the comforts of his own Spirit, and he seales up all comforts from our spirits.

Verse 8. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.

This verse gives us a further argument of the mighty power of God. See how *Jobs* discourse moves from earth to heaven, and from the heavens down to the sea. He searches for the wonders of Gods power and wisdom, in heaven and earth, and in the waters. Before he shews God stopping the course of the Sun, and sealing up the stars ; now spreading out of the heavens, and treading upon the sea.

He spreadeth out the heavens.

The heavens in reference to the earth, are the upper part of the world. The heavens are (as it were) the roof of the great house, which God made, or as a spangled Canopy over our heads, *He spreadeth out the heavens* ; The word is of the *Duall* number in the Hebrew, and hath divers derivations, which are considerable to enlighten us in the point.

He spreadeth out the heavens.

Some derive it from *Shem*, which signifies a name, a name of honour

honour and dignity, *Men of Name* are men of renown (*Gen. 6.4.*) *Nomen, gloria, decus, quia cælum est nominatissima pars mundi.* Martin.

Others, because there are waters above in these heavens, derive the word from (*Sham*) which is an adverb of place, and (*Ma-jim*) which signifies waters ; as much as to say, *there are waters*, or there is a place, where God hath fountains and stores of water. All his waters are not upon the earth, he hath waters and springs in heaven. *in Lex Philos. Anhi Ha-them.*

A third takes it for a simple, not a compound word, being near the *Ishmaelitish* word *Shama*, noting only superiority in place, high or above. *Paulus Fagius in Gen. 1.*

A fourth opinion derives it from *Schamem*, which signifies, *to be amazed*, or to make one at a stand with wonder : And the reason is given, because the heavens are such a vast, stupendious body, that if a man look upon them exactly, they will amaze him. Who can observe the Sun, Moon and Stars, and not wonder, and be transported, at their vastness and beauty, at the swiftness and regularity of their motions; it is above the reach and apprehension of naturall reason, how the Lord should fashion and spread out such heavens. *עֲמֻמָּה אֲמֻמָּה*
Obstupuit, propter insignem vastitatem istius corporis, quæ ipsa nos aspicientes in stuporem rapit. Pisc. in Gen. 1.

But what are these heavens which he spreadeth forth ?

Heaven is sometimes expressed with an addition, *the highest heavens, the third heavens*, in 2 Cor. 12.12. *The heaven of heavens*, 1 King. 8.27. *Paul* was wrapt up to *the third heavens*, that is, in visions and revelations he was brought as near to God himself, as a creature possible can. Of this heaven we are to understand that, *Gen. 1.1.* where *Moses* saith, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and the earth was without form and void.* He doth not say, the heaven which God created at first, was without form and void, but the earth was without form and void; for that heaven was a perfect creature. We read further of the creating of those heavens which we see, of the visible heavens, which are the continent of the Sun, Moon and Stars. But, *In the beginning God created the heaven*; that heaven which by way of eminency is called, *The habitation of his holiness, and his glory*, Isa. 63. 15. This was created in the beginning, and then, it is conceived the Angels were likewise created; but, the earth which was then made was an imperfect creature, and all other corporall creatures with their

their severall forms and fulness were extracted out of that earth, which was *without form and void*. The very heavens (which we see) were made out of that first earth, Sun, Moon, and the Stars, yea, the very light it self was made out of that earth, that general heap of matter which the Lord created at first, and is said to have been *without form and void*. But the heaven, which we call *the heaven of heavens, the third heaven, or the highest heaven*, was a perfect creature the first day, made without any pre-existent matter whatsoever by the power of God. This heaven is the largest of all the heavens which God spread out.

Secondly, Take heavens for the visible heavens. I intend not to stay upon philosophical considerations, only what the Scripture holds forth; we find heavens put, first for the starry heavens or the firmament, where the stars have their motion, that's the heaven meant (*Gen. 1. 17. Psal. 8. 7. Psal. 19. 1.*) This, according to the doctrine of Astronomers, is distinguished into severall Orbs and Spheres, in seven of which seven special stars are said to move, and all the rest to be fixed in the eighth.

The Apostle Jude seems to give a hint of those planetical Orbs (*Jude v. 13.*) where he justly reproacheth unsettled spirits by the name of *wandering stars or planets, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever*.

Thirdly, Heaven is taken in Scripture for a nearer heaven, for all that which is below the Moon, for the air and the clouds. Hence the birds are said to flie in the heavens; and (*Gen. 8. 2.*) the rain from heaven was restrained, that is, the rain from the clouds, for there is no rain in that heaven above the clouds.

Heaven is a building of three stories. The first story is the air and the clouds up to the moon. The second story reaches all the planets and stars. The third story is also called, *the third heaven*, or the heaven of heavens, the place of his most glorious residence, who filleth heaven and earth.

All these heavens the Lord spreadeth out.

There is a threefold spreading forth of a thing.

First, By contusion or beating with hammers, as a mass of gold or silver, &c. is spread into thin plates or leaves.

Secondly, by way of rarefaction or attenuation; water is rarefied by fire, and so are metals, when they are melted or caused to run with extreame heat. In allusion to which, *Elihu* speaks in his challenge to *Job* (*Chap. 37. 18.*) *Hast thou with him spread out the*

skie

Triplex est caelum aerium firmamentum ac aliud his superius, invisibile et divinum. Dam. l. 2. de orthodoma fide.

skie which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass. The skie is of a weak, sleight matter, not hard, massie, or elemental, yet it is strong; and the nature of it being incorruptible, the figure of it round and indissoluble. And it is compared to a looking-glass, for the clearness of it; those instruments were made, some of glass, some of steel or brass, molten and polisht for that purpose.

Thirdly, A thing is spread forth by unfolding the parts, as a tent or a curtain is spread: and thus the spreading of the heavens is described, *Psal. 104. 1, 2. O Lord, thou art cloathed with honour and majesty, thou stretchest out the heavens like a curtain.* God took the vast matter folded together, and spread it as a curtain, tabernacle or tent. And the * Latine word which carries the interpretation of this in the Hebrew, is frequently applied by ancient Authors, to the pitching of tents in war. In this third sense we are specially to understand the Text, *Alone spreadeth out the heavens.*

And so this spreading is either an exposition of the nature of the heavens (*Gen. 1. 8.*) *The Lord said let there be light in the firmament;* the Hebrew is * *Let there be an expansion*, or a stretching forth. These heavens are so much spread forth, that they are called, *a thing spread forth*; and so the text is a description of the heavens in their first Creation. Or, it may refer to the words going before, and so these are a reason to shew that God can command the Sun, and seal up the stars, why? *He spreadeth forth the heavens*; that is, the heavens are all of his making, and at his disposing; he set the Sun there, and put the stars there, he fashioned the orbs in which they are placed, and therefore he can stay the Sun, and seal the stars.

And as he thus spreadeth out the heavens, so, which is more observable, *He spreadeth them out alone.* When a piece of hangings or the like of a large extent is to be spread forth, one man cannot doe it, many hands are put to that work. It is an axiome in Divinity, *that no creature can be an instrument in Creation*: this stretching forth of the heavens, is an act of Creation, therefore he alone doth it, there is none to help him.

Yet we find that God had some other with him, when he stretched out the heavens, though it be here attributed to him alone: and though *Elihu* expostulates with *Job* in this point (*Chap. 37. 18.*) *Hast thou with him spread out the skie which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass?* *Elihu* would bring down the thoughts of *Job*,

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Extendit, di-
stendit, sicut
tentorium.

* Hic de lapum
manus, hic sa-
vus tendebat
Apollo. Virg.
2. Eniad.

Juxta hortos
tendebat. Suet.

in Galb. c. 12
d. Germano-
rum. Cohorte.

Et milites ten-
dere omnes ex-
tra vallum jus-
sit. Tac. l. 13.

* Cælum sive
firmamentum
vocatur עִקְרָא
eo quod est ex-
pansum & ex-
tensum super
terram Solus
sine cujusquam
ilio.

Instrumentum
creationis crea-
tura esse non
potest.

*Solus, quia ne-
mo extra ipsum
cum ipso, sed u-
na cum ipso illi
qui in ipso per
identitatem
substantiae sunt;
verbo enim
Domini sunt
celi, & spiritu
omnis ejus omnis
virtus eorum
Solum enim
divinitas facit,
quæ ut una ita
& sola.*

which he conceived were too much lifted up, by shewing that God did this alone; *Job* (saith he) didst thou hold one part of this great Curtain or Canopy of heaven in thy hand, and God another, and was it so spread out between you? No, neither man nor angel was his helper; who then was with God in this work? *Solomon* tells us, (*Prov. 8. 27.*) *When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he set a compass upon the face of the depth.* Who was that? *I wisdom was there. Jesus Christ was there.* Christ was he by whom God prepared and stretched forth the heavens. No creature was there, only the uncreated, creating Son of God. God created alone, that is, without the help of any creature; but he created all things by the *Word*, and the word was with God, and the Word was God. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* Observe from hence,

First, *The heavens are as the royal Tent and pavilion of the Lord.*

He spreadeth them out. The Lord is often exprest coming out of the heavens with warlike preparations: There his tent is pitcht, and he sitteth there, as a great Commander in his pavilion, to give out orders to his Armies. He hath an host in heaven, and therefore he hath a tent in heaven; or rather heaven is his tent. *The Lord bath his way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet, Nah. 1. 3.* God pitches his battel in heaven; *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.* He fought from heaven; from thence he discharged his great Artillery, his Cannons thundered and lightned against the enemies of his people. He hath also his store-houses for ammunition, his Magazines there (*Job 38. 22.*) *Hast thou (saith God to Job) entred into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, the day of battel and war?* He speaks of heaven as of a great store-house, where he hath his arms, his powder and ball, all his warlike provision laid up against the day of battel. Heathens have spoken such language, calling storms and tempest, hail and thunder, *The weapons and engines of the Armory of heaven.*

Secondly, In that he saith, *He stretcheth out the heavens alone,* observe,

That the Lord needs not the help of any creature to do his greatest works.

He hath power, and he hath power in himself to do what he hath

*Est allusio ad
armamentaria
publica, ubi ar-
norum, machi-
narum et tor-
mentorum in-
gens apparatus
reconditur. Bo
Quicquid ha-
bentielor um
armamentaria
celi. Juven.
Sat. 13.*

hath a will should be done; let all the creatures in the world stand still, yet God can carry his work forward. What work is like this, the stretching forth the heavens: There cannot be a work of so much difficulty under heaven, as the spreading forth of the heavens. He, who did that alone, what can he not do alone? Though men will not, though men cannot help, the Lord can and will alone. Isa. 59. 16. *He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessour; no man to do, no man to speak in that business, not a man appeared: what then? doth the Lord say, well seeing there is no man to do, I also will let it lie? No, Therefore his arm brought salvation unto him, and his power sustained him; he did it alone. Paul speaks of himself, that at his first appearing before Nero, all men forsook him, not a man would own him, but (saith he) The Lord stood by me (Tim. 4. 15.) This is a great encouragement to us in great affairs and businesses, in the greatest straits and difficulties of the times; if men forsake and desert, the Lord alone can do all for us; if men have not power to do what they have will to do, nor will to do what they have power; then remember, *He that stretcheth out the Heavens alone*, can order our works alone, compose our differences alone, conquer our enemies alone. God alone is infinite, greater, stronger, wiser, then all creatures together. God can be now as he will be hereafter, *all in all unto us*. God is enough for us without any creature; yea, God and all that he hath made cannot do more than God, without any thing that he hath made.*

And treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.

The sea is a fluid body; to sail or swim in the waters is ordinary, but to tread upon the waters, that's another act of wonder, *He treadeth upon the waves of the Sea*; or, he walks on them as upon a pavement.

To tread upon the waves imports, that God hath a command over the sea, and the waves of it. To tread upon a thing is to have it under our power, or in subjection to us (Psal. 91. 13.) the promise is, *Thou shalt tread upon the Lyon, and upon the Asp*; that is, thou shalt prevail and triumph over the greatest evils, over enemies as strong and fierce as Lyons, as poysonous and stinging as the Asp, Psal. 108. 9. *Over Edome will I cast out my shoe*; which notes either contempt of them; as if he had said, I look upon them as worthy only to scrape and make clean my shoes. Or secondly, Conquest

*Verbum Darac
ali quando est
docis præliantis
de debellantis
hostes. Quasi
jure belli sub
jicere.*

*Calcabit stella
e Jacob.*

וַיִּדְבֹּק
*Excelsa maris.
Ambulat super
altitudinem ro-
boris maris.
Tar. Robar
Maris
dicit vehemen-
tiam maris
quando a ventis
turbatur et
commovetur.
Dorsum imma-
ne junctum mari
attivibuit. Virg.
Eniad. l. 1.*

over them; I will walk thorow Edom and subdue it. *Deut. 11. 24.* Every place whereon the sole of your feet shall tread shall be yours; that is, yours shall be conquering feet, you shall tread as Lords upon all lands. Yours shall be all the ground you go on, that is, it shall be subject to you, *Judg. 5. 21.* O my soul, thou hast troden down strength; and *Mic. 1. 3.* The Lord shall tread upon the high places of the earth; that is, the Lord shall subject the highest things that are upon the earth to his Power. That place is very observable, *Numb. 24. 17.* Where Balaam prophesying of Christ, saith (as we translate) *A star shall come out of Jacob*; the Hebrew is, *A star shall tread out of Jacob*, noting Christ a victorious, a triumphant star, who should come treading and trampling upon the world as conquerour; though the world in regard of his out-side trod and trampled upon him: so 'tis explained in the latter words of the verse, *He shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. A star shall tread out of Jacob. A treading star is a triumphing star.*

The Hebrew is, *He treadeth upon the high places of the Sea*; the word (*Bamoth*) is used frequently for the places where idolatrous worship was set up, *their high places*. Mr. Broughton translates, *the high waves of the sea*; because sea waves rise high, so high, that the Psalmist describes them, *mounting up to the heaven* (*Psal. 107. 26.*) When these high waves threaten to swallow all, then the Lord treads upon them, that is, his power is above them, and he makes them submit to his command. *As to ride upon the high places of the earth* (*Deut. 32. 13. Isa. 58. 14.*) is to have highest command, and to be a chief upon the earth, or to dwell safely and free from annoyance upon the earth: So to tread upon the high places or high waves of the sea, implies Gods Empire or Sovereignty over the Sea.

Hence observe, first,

That the sea in its highest rage is at the beck, and under the treadings of God.

When the waves are most stirring and raging, he speaks them quiet, *Psal. 89. 9.* *Thou rulest the raging of the sea, when the waves thereof arise thou stillest them.* As to walk upon the Sea is an argument of a divine power, so to command the Sea. When Christ (*Mat. 8. 26.*) rebuked the sea, and said, as another Gospel hath it (*Mark. 4. 38.*) *Peace and be still*, as if one should hush a child; *The men marvelled, saying, what manner of man is this, that even the winds*

winds and the sea obey him? winds and waves seem the most disobedient, stubborn and unteachable creatures in the world, yet a word from God calms the one, and smooths the other. When the old Egyptians would by their Hieroglyphicks express an impossibility, they did it by the picture of a man treading upon the waves; as if they should say, this is as impossible as for a man to walk upon the waves. The Heathen Poets describe Neptune their Sea-god, swimming, not walking upon, or treading the waters. To tread upon the waters is so much above man, that meer Naturalists thought it too much for God. Man shews his pride and arrogancy to the height, when he pretends to lord it over the waves of the sea. When the Hellespont, a strait of the sea, by a sudden storm rising upon it, broke the bridge of Boats, which Xerxes had made to pass into Greece, and so opposed the project of that Persian Monarch, he cast fetters into it, as if he would teach it to know its Lord, and caused it to be beaten with 300 stripes, to chasten its former disobedience. It is recorded in the history of this Nation, concerning Canute an ancient Danish King, that when a mighty storm of flattery rose upon him, he appealed it by shewing he could not appease the storms of the sea. One of his Courtiers told him in his progress, as he rode near the sea-side, that he was Lord not only of the land, but of the sea, and that all those seas which he saw, were at his command. Well, saith he, we shall see that by and by, and so walked down to the shore, and pulling off his upper garment, wraps it together, and sits upon it neer the flowing of the waves, and with a loud voice speaks thus, O ye seas and waves come no further, Touch not my feet, &c. But the sea came up, notwithstanding his charge, and confuted that flattery. God only hath this prerogative, He treadeth upon the high waves of the sea.

There are also mystical waves, which the Lord treadeth upon: people and Nations are called waters, and many waters, in the book of the Revelation. The waves of the Sea cannot be in a greater rage, then the Nations of the earth sometimes are. And the same Hebrew word by which the rage of the sea is properly expressed, expresses also the rage of men (Psal. 2. 1.) Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? Why are the Gentiles, the great waters up as high waves, threatening a deluge to the throne of Christ? The power of Christ is as eminent in stilling the rage of the mystical, as of the literall waters; yea, we find these

*Egyptij ut rem
prorsus impossi-
bilem demon-
strarent, homi-
nem pedibus su-
per aquas am-
bulantem in
suis Hierogly-
phicis depin-
gebant.*

*Veteres cum su-
um Neptunum
super aquas
ambulantem
pingere non au-
derent, à nudo
ei nomen dede-
runt. Herod.
l. 1.*

*Delebat Canu-
ti regis Anglo-
rum exemplum
qui assentatio-
nis procellam,
procella maris
in se admissa,
compescuit.*

*Bold. ex Cam.
Brit.*

*Ex alto incita-
tum flutum, ita
alloquitur est,
unda tibi jubeo,
ut ne pedes me-
os targas.*

these two matcht together (Psal. 65. 7.) *He stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waters, the tumult of the people.* Hence the Apostle Jude (vers. 13.) calls wicked men, *raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame.* The Lord sitteth upon these flouds; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever, Psal. 29. 10.

There are other mysticall waves, even waves within us, which will not be trodden upon by any foot but Gods. There is a sea of wickedness in every mans heart by nature. Every wicked man is nothing but a sea, he is a sea of wickedness. *The wicked (Isa. 57. 20.) are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest.* And as the windes blow from all quarters of the heavens, and strive upon the seas: So there are divers lusts, which as winds strive upon the face of mans heart, the lust of pride, the lust of covetousness, the lusts of ambition, of envy, of malice, these enrage and swell the waters. The Lord treads upon the high waves of this sea also, he restrains and keeps lust down by his power, it would drown all else. These raging waves swell too high in his own people; it is the work of the Spirit to tread these down; and when the windes of several temptations raise those waves, he it is that commands them down. Who amongst us is there, that one time or other finds not corruption raging, as the high waves of the Sea? How mighty and powerful is the Lord in that great work of his effectual grace, treading upon the waves of this sea, remaining corruption in his servants and children!

Vers. 9. *Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.*

In astrorum
pulchritudine,
situ, ordine, vi
stupendisque in
hæc inferiora
operationibus,
admirabilis
prorsus creato-
ris magnificen-
tia et magnitu-
do plurimum
elucet. Bol.

In the verse immediately before, we heard of the power of God in stretching out the heavens; and in this we have his excellent skill, and infinite wisdom displayed in adorning, decking and beautifying those heavens which he had stretched forth. He hath not only drawn out a vast piece of work, like a large Canopy (such are the heavens) but he hath embroidered this Canopy, and set it with rich sparkling stones; he hath made several engravings, images, figures, and representations upon it.

Or we may make the connexion with the latter clause of the former verse. Job having said that the Lord *treadeth upon the high waves of the sea*; that when the seas are most stormy and tempestuous, they are at his command, and that their confusions are under his Empire and order; he adds this verse by way of answer to a possible

sible objection: For some might say, the motion of the seas is from the power and influences of the stars, from the rising and setting of the moon, with other plannets and constellations. True saith *Job*, yet the Lord is he that treadeth upon the waves of the Sea, it is the Lord that orders them, and not the stars: Though the stars and constellations have a dominion over the seas in their ebbings and flowings, motions and revolutions, yet there is a Lord who hath power, not only over the seas, but over that which overpowers the seas, even over the stars of heaven. *He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the Chambers of the South*; which stars according to the doctrine of Astronomy, have a special power upon the seas.

*Cum multa sint
astra hominibus
et fl. & ibus in-
fensa, eorum
præcipue memi-
nit, quorum vis
ad sciendas tem-
pestates homi-
nibus magna est
explorata. San.*

Either of these wayes we may make the connexion.

First, That *Job* would express the adorning of the heavens, after he had spoken of their making and stretching forth.

Or secondly, He would teach us, that though the heavens work upon the seas, yet God works upon the heavens. *He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.*

I shall endeavour to speak of these distinctly; the holy Ghost giving us such a Text, it is not lightly to be passed by: and though here are strange words and uncouth expressions, yet we may (I hope) bring them down to an easie meaning, and fit them to the understanding of the simplest.

I shall touch a little in the general before I come to every one in particular.

Job under these names couches many of the stars of heaven. A Star (according to Philosophy) is the thicker part of its orb or sphere; it is thicker then other parts of the heavens, for otherwise as it could not hold the light, so it could not reflect and send forth the light; it could not be a vessel for light, or a conveyance for light. Light was created the first day (*Gen. 1. 3.*) but the lights were created the fourth day (*Gen. 1. 14.*) that is, certain vessels were created to hold the light. And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of heaven; that is, let the light which is now scattered thorow all, be gathered in certain receptacles, fit to keep, and yet fitted to transmit and disperse it into all parts of the world, *Let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light,* verse 15.

*Stella est dens-
sior pars orbis:
ideo lucent a-
stra, non celi;
quia hi diapha-
ni sunt, et vari-
astra autem
densa, eoque lu-
cem retinentia
et resplendentia.
Magyr. Phys.*

Of these lights or stars, some are called moving, and others fixed. That's the doctrine of Astronomers, and it is the doctrine of the Scrip-

Scripture. The Apostile *Jude* (verf. 13.) calling some *wandering stars*, seems to admit of that distinction of the stars into wandering and fixed. The unfixed or wandering stars are seven, known by their names and motions. These in the text are none of them; these are placed above them.

The seat of these *Asterismes*, is in the eighth sphere (to take that doctrine for granted, though many dispute it) or story of the heavens (so the Prophet *Amos* speaks, Chap. 9. 2. *He buildeth his stories in the heavens*; we put in the margin, spheres, *he buildeth his spheres in the heavens*, which being one above another, are elegantly called the stories of heaven) I say in the eighth sphere innumerable stars are fixed: Some of which fall under special observation and numeration. Astronomers give us a Catalogue of a thousand three and twenty stars, which they exactly distinguish; which is the ancient account. And since that, we have had many more discoveries by those noble Navigators, who have made *thorow lights to the world*, that the East might look into the West, and the South into the North: The travel study and experiments of these Masters in Navigation have brought us in an additional number of three hundred stars more. And so reckon a thousand three hundred, and twenty three fixed stars known by name; of which these in the text are a part.

The other stars are both innumerable and unnameable, beyond number and without name. Hence when the Lord shewed *Abraham* how great his seed should be, he carries him out, and bids him look toward heaven, and tell the stars if he were able to number them, *Gen. 15. 5.*

The stars (to come a little nearer the Text) observed and numbered by *Students* in this great volume of the heavens, are distinguished into *fourty and one Images or representations*, whereof some (for learnings sake) are fancied the images of men and women, others the images of beasts and fishes, others the images of things without life. Of these images, twelve are in the *Zodiack*, commonly called the *twelve Signs*. In the Southern part of the sphere eleven of those signs are placed, and in the Northern eighteen, which added to twelve in the *Zodiack*, make up the number of *fourty and one*.

Now when it is said in the text, *That God maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South*, we are not to take them for so many distinct & particular stars, but for constellations, or configurations, because they stand in such a form or figure: and

Omnes hæ stelarum imagines non tantum ordine et situ, verum etiam certis nominibus inter se distinctæ sunt.

and so for the better knowledge of them they are called by the names of such creatures as they seem to represent.

We have three of those speciall figures here in the Text, and one more generall. *Arcturus*, *Orion* and *Pleiades* are three figures, or starry representations in the eighth sphear. I will open their Hebrew names. As also the Latine and Greek names, used commonly in translations, by which we shall get a clearer understanding in the nature of the things themselves.

Which maketh Arcturus.

The word *Gnesb* in Hebrew, signifies a meeting or congregating of many things together, because in that one, many stars, are joyned. *Arcturus* in Greek is as much as to say, *The tail of the Bear*, because the stars called *Arcturus* stand in a figure like the tail of a Bear.

The second *Asterisme*, which we translate *Orion*, is called in the Hebrew (*Chesil*) and that signifies either constancy or inconstancy (the sense runs both wayes) settledness or variableness. And it is applied to this star or constellation in either sense.

First, For constancy or settledness, because there is much strength in the influences of that constellation.

Or, secondly, For inconstancy and unsettledness, because it is observed, that upon the rising of this star, there is much variety, changeableness and unsettledness in the weather. Hence the Jews call that month which answers to our *November*, or the ninth month, *Chislu* (*Zec. 7. 1.*) because that month was usually very stormy and the weather changeable, *Orion* then arising in their *Hemisphear*. The Arabick word (*Algenese*) by which this *Asterisme* is named, signifies a *warriour*; and the Chaldees (*Algebar*) a *Giant*, all aiming at the furious, boisterous winds which usually attend the appearing of this constellation. And so the Greek word from which *Orion* cometh, signifies to trouble or to disturb. And its usuall Epithetes are *bold*, *vehement*, *impetuous Orion*, all betraying its unquiet and various temper.

The third starry association we call *Pleiades*, the Hebrews, *Chimah*. This is a very cold constellation. The Greeks express winter

ΩΥ Congregare, conglobare, huic respondet Græcum verbum συροδεν, quod est, commeare, vel undiquaq; conventro. Arcturus stella est cauda minoris ursæ, & Septentrio dicitur, παρὰ τὴν τῆς ἀρκτὸς ὀφρ, ab ursine caudæ similitudine.

Constantiam, robur, vel inconstantiam significat, quod ejus ortus tempestatibus orbem variè turbat. Bold.

Unde November Hebraice dicitur Chislu, ab ortu Orionis, quod eo mense magna sit Cæli inconstantia: Arabice vocatur Algenese, i. e. bellator; à Chaldeis Algebar, i. e. Gigas, θεγας & δειον. Audax, vehementis, ardens Orion. Plin. lib. 18. cap. 15. δειον Græci est turbo, concito. Pagn. in Thes. Dum pelago deservit hyems & aquosus Orion.

Quidam Pleiades dictas putant, quæ πλεῖδες, i. e. plures, quod nunquam singula apparent.

Pleiades, ἀπὸ τῶ πλεῖν, navi by, γὰρ χεῖμα.

Cur vocatur
Chimah liben-
ter fa'eor me
nescire. Bold.
Quidam dedu-
cunt à *QIP*
Chaldaicuri,
quod denotat
rem elevatam
stabiliter et in
sublime firmi-
ter erectam. qui-
a est instar cur-
dinis, quasi po-
lus aut vertex
mundi.
Alij a *חמ*
quod est deside-
rare, in rem ali-
quam tendere,
quia Nautæ af-
fectant videre
hoc signum,
חמ *
Interiora au-
stri. Nam Deus
ex ipsis prom-
ptuariis, quasi
de thesauro suis
quosdam educit
ventos, et per
iplos mirabiles
siderum illorum
influxus, intel-
ligit æstiva si-
dera, ut est Ca-
nicula, &c.
Quæ quia ad
Polum distan-
tium spectant
(qui velut in-
rior subest Ho-
rizonti nostro)
peneiraliam.
Austri sidera
vocantur, quasi
in peneiralibus
mundi a nobis
abscoudita.

by this word, because it brings in frost and cold with it. The deri-
vation of the Hebrew name is very obscure. Some professedly ac-
knowledge their ignorance, that they cannot tell how to derive
it, yet some dig the root of it in the Chaldee, signifying *firm*, O-
thers in the Hebrew, signifying *to desire*, or *earnestly to wish for a*
things; and the reason of it is (say they) because these stars (the
Pleiades) the seven stars we often speak of, are much desired by
Seamen, for seeing them, they have a perfect rule to guide and steer
their course by. And it is an Observation among some of the Rab-
bins, that *Noah* had a little window in the top of his Ark, that
from thence he might (when the waters began to assuage, and
the stress of the deluge was over) look up to the heavens, and
know by those stars what course his Ark made. Thus much we
know, that the stars are the Sea-mens night-guide, and the rising
of some of them falls under their more speciall observation.

The fourth title of the stars is, * *The Chambers of the South*.
And why, *The Chambers of the South*? The continent is put
for the things contained. The word which we translate *Cham-*
bers, signifies any thing that is very inward or retired, and
therefore translated a chamber, *Judg.* 15. 1. and *Cant.* 3. 4. Mans
spirits is thus expressed, because it lies so far inward (*Prov.* 24. 4.)
By knowledge shall the Chambers be filled; that is, the most secret
parts of the soul shall be filled by knowledge, *Prov.* 18. 8. *The in-*
ward part of the belly. *Prov.* 7. 27. *They goe down to the chamber of*
death; that is, to the inmost and most retired wayes of death, the
grave. Here, *The chambers of the South* are the most remote, hidden
and secret parts of the South. And the reason why after he had
expressed the other constellations by speciall names, he gives us these
only in generall [*The chambers of the South*] is, because the stars
which are under the Southern pole, are hidden from us, and are
enclosed & lodged as in a chamber. God locks them up in his trea-
sury, and they are secrets to this place of the world; the southern
Pole being under or below our Horizon. In the artificiall sphears
of heaven we find few Asterismes or descriptions of the stars
about those parts; there are many, but we perceive them not.
And the vertue & operation of these chambered, hidden stars, is as
strong, as of those, which appear in the greatest lustre and beauty.
Again, When he saith, *Which maketh Arcturus, &c.* his meaning
is, *Which makes them appear*, or do their office. These stars were
made when the heavens were made; and *Jobs* discourse is not a-
bout

bout creation, but providence. So that to make *Arcturus*, &c. in the sense of this Text, is only this, to order the times of their rising and setting, to distinguish the seasons of the year, and to produce their severall effects in every season, which providentiall acts are here especially aimed at. Thus he maketh *Arcturus* to rise, about the middle of *September*, which is the time of the *Equinox*, when the civil day and night are even, and share the hours of the naturall day equally between them. Or, as others account, this star rises about eleven dayes before the *Equinox*. So, by *Arcturus* we may understand that season of the year: And he maketh *Arcturus*, is, he orders and disposeth of the season, commonly called *Autumn*. *Orion* shines forth in our *Hemisphere*, about the month of *December*, and by that, winter is designed. The *Pleiades* begin at the spring, therefore called *Vergiliae*, because they arise (*vere*) in the spring, and disappear or go down toward winter. The chambers of the South, are fiery stars, which have their chief influence upon us in heat of Summer.

And so we may put the Text into these plain expressions, He maketh *Arcturus*, *Orion* and *Pleiades*, and the chambers of the South. That is,

First, He makes and orders *Summer*, and *Winter*, *Spring* and *Harvest*, because these stars divide the four seasons of the year.

Or, secondly, thus, He makes hot and cold, wet and dry, storm and calm.

Or, thirdly, as these four constellations are assigned to the four chief points of heaven. *Arcturus* is known by all, who know any thing in the heavens, to be seated about the Northen Pole, whose opposites are those stars in the chambers of the South. *Orion* dwells in the East, and the *Pleiades* in the West.

So the plain English of the words is this, that The Lord by his mighty power and wisdom ordereth and appointeth the motions of heaven, from East to West, from North to South.

Lastly, To clear up the sense of this Text, we must understand these four constellations *Synecdochically*, these being put for all the rest; For as God orders these, so every star in the firmament; the least are under his eye, and at his dispose, as well as the greatest. But because these are the most eminent, usefull and efficacious in their appearances, motions and influences, therefore these are named. He maketh *Arcturus*, *Orion* and *Pleiades*, and the chambers of the South.

We may observe from the words thus opened divers profitable instructions.

First, *All the stars are placed in the heavens by the speciall designment of God for the use and good of man.*

Moses (Deut. 4. 19.) gives a caution to Israel from the Lord, that they should take heed of imitating the Heathens in their abominations, and this is one particular, *Lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all Nations under the whole heaven.* Observe that, *The Lord thy God hath divided them unto all Nations under heaven;* Therefore take heed that thou do not worship them. They are the work of God, they are creatures; and worship, which is proper to the Creator, must not be given to them. It is a remarkable Text, *Lest (saith he) thou shouldest be driven to worship them,* How driven? Not by externall force and power, but driven by the strong inclination of thine heart, ravished with such beautifull objects. The excellency that is in the works of God hath power to draw, yea to drive the heart of man to commit idolatry. Job shews this, while he acquits himself so industriously from it (Chap. 31. 26, 27.) *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth had kissed my hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge, &c.* Some translate that (Deut. 4.) in this language of Job, *Lest thou be deceived to worship the Sun, Moon and Stars, and hosts of heaven:* this is very considerable: but the thing I chiefly note in that Scripture to the point in hand, is this, That the Lord hath made and appointed the stars to the several parts of the heavens, he hath divided them to all Nations under the whole heavens. Some stars are the portion of one people; others of another. As the earth is an inheritance divided among the children of men; so also are the stars and heavens. We seldom consider what riches we receive from that part of our inheritance; most think they live by the earth only; No, saith Moses, *The Lord hath divided the heavens, the Sun, Moon and Stars, unto all Nations under heaven.* He hath settled it, what star such a Land shall have, and in what seasons, as also what proportions of the Sun, and Moon, for light, heat and influence. He hath made them for the children of men. Man is fed and cloathed, warmed and cherished from heaven more then from the earth: the lot and divisions which we have of

Per hanc divisionem intelligit ordinem et motum planetarum, qui in suis orbibus ita disponuntur, ut, unaquæque regio suo tempore eorum gaudeat influxibus.
Pined.

of the earth, are naturally and usually good or bad, rich or barren, pleasant or unpleasant, healthy or unwholesome, according as the aspects of the heaven and stars, are more or less benigne, or favourable unto them. *Moses* (Deut. 29. 26.) reproves the ingratitude of the *Jews* by this argument, *Because they went and served other Gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given to them.* So we translate. But the letter of the Hebrew gives it thus; *who had not given to them, or divided among them any portion.* As if *Moses* had said, The Lord divided and gave the heavens and the stars among you, and these base dunghill-gods never gave you so much as a clod of earth, and will ye depart from *Jehovah* to serve them?

Secondly Observe, *God knoweth the number, the names and the nature of all the stars.*

He gives them speciall names. These in the translation are names of mans imposition. Yet the holy Ghost uses Heathenish names in the new Testament (*Act. 28. 11.*) we read of a Ship, in which *Paul* sailed to *Rome*, whose sign was *Castor and Pollux*, two Pagan Sea-gods. It is said, that God brought all the beasts of the earth to *Adam*, that he should give them names; but he brought not the host of heaven to *Adam*, that he should give them names, he named them himself, *Psal. 147. 4.* *He telleth the number of the stars, he calleth them all by their names.* Men are not able to tell the number of the stars; they tell distinctly but to a thousand three hundred, or a few more, and they are not able to tell all these by distinct names, but they are constrained to reckon them by constellations, where a whole family of stars are called by one name. The Lord hath made it his speciall priviledge to tell the number of the stars, and to call them all by their names. And these are named in the Text for all the rest. Observe,

Thirdly, some stars are more excellent, of greater vertue and name then others; when these are named, it is for speciall reason. The Lord nameth these, as stars of more then ordinary dignity. These are in degree next to the Sun and Moon: when a few are named for many, we usually name the chiefeſt: as the whole people of the *Jews* are set forth by the heads of their Tribes, by the Chiefs; and when a Nation is spoken of, it is by those greater names, *the Magistrate and the Ministers.* These are named, because they have most to do, and the greatest business in a Nation. So these stars are here named, because they are of speciall use and influence.

influence. The Apostle gives us this clearly (1 Cor. 15. 41.) *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. One star hath a more honourable name then another. Some stars God doth not vouchsafe to name particularly to us, when others, which are of greater glory, are. As in a building, some parts of it are cheif, The foundation, the top stone, the corner stone; the strength and beauty of the whole building are comprehended under these. God hath made differences and degrees in all creatures; in the heavenly as well as earthly. The names of most stars are concealed, as being of a lower degree. And we find that whensoever in Scripture stars are spoken of, scarce any are named but these, and these are often named, which implies their superiority and dignity. The prophet urges this as an argument of humblest addressees unto, and dependance upon God. (Amos 5. 8.) Seek him that maketh the seven stars (that is, Pleiades) and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, &c. He doth not say, Seek him that maketh all the stars, the Lord made all. But because he hath given so much vertue and excellency to these, these only are reported as of his making. Here, Which maketh Arcturus: (there) Seek him which maketh the seven stars; As if he had said, In those stars God hath laid out much of himself, and made his power and wisdom most visible: How much hath God in himself, who hath communicated so much to one senseless creature?*

And though stars differ thus one from another, yet they envy not one another. Which lessons us to be content, though God make our names lesse named in the world, then the names of many of our brethren; though he trust more talents to, or put more light into others, then into our selves. One star differs from another star in glory, but no star envies anothers glory.

Fourthly, Job being about to declare the power and wisdom of God, gives instance (among other things) in this, *He maketh Arcturus, Orion, &c.* Then observe,

The power and wisdom of God shine eminently in the stars.

The power and wisdom of God shine in every grasse that grows out of the ground; yea in every clod of earth, much more then in the stars of heaven. Much of God is seen in those works of God; yea, so much, that many have been drawn to make them gods. There is so much of God seen in the heavens, that not only Heathens, who had not the true knowledge of God: but his

Covenant-

Covenant-people, who knew him, and whom he knew above all the Families of the earth, have been drawn away to worship the host of heaven. That place before cited (*Deut. 4.*) hinteth as much, *Take heed, lest when thou liftest up thine eyes to heaven, and seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the host of heaven, thou shouldest be driven to worship them and serve them.* If thou lift up thine eyes to the stars, and not higher, even to God who made the stars, thou wilt quickly mistake the stars for God, or make the stars thy god; the heart of man is mad upon Idolatry. Read how often the Jews are taxed with this sin, *2 Kings 21. 3.* and in *2 Kings 17. 16.* and in *Amos 5. 26.* which clears this truth, that much of the power and wisdom of God is stamped upon the stars; if God did not much appear in the stars, so many had not taken the stars for God, or given them, which is proper and peculiar to God, religious worship.

There are five or six things which shew the power of God and his wisdom in making of the stars.

First, *The greatness of the Stars*; such vast bodies shew an infinite power in their constitution. It is incredible to ordinary reason (unless men have skill and learning to make it out, and to lay the course of nature together) that the stars are so great. The Sun is reckoned by Astronomers to be one hundred sixty six times bigger than all the earth. The Moon indeed, which is called a great light, is thirty nine times less than the earth, yet the magnitude is far beyond common apprehension. Some other of the planets are almost an hundred times bigger than the earth. And whereas the fixed stars are distinguished into six magnitudes, or differences of greatness; Those of the first magnitude (which are many) are conceived to be one hundred and seven times bigger than the whole earth. We look upon a star, as if it were no bigger than the blaze of a Candle, and the Country-man wonders if the Moon be bigger than his bushell, or broader than his Cart-wheel. If the most judicious enter the consideration of these things, they may soon come to amazement, that so many stars in the heavens should be more than an hundred times bigger than all the earth. And if there are such vast bodies in heaven, what a vast body is heaven? That continent must needs be exceedingly exceeding vast, which contains so many exceeding vast bodies in it. If we get but a nook or corner of the earth for our portion, we presently think our selves great men: yet what is all the earth to the heavens?

And

And what are the heavens we see to that heaven which is unseen, to which these are but a pavement? The heavens which are to us a roof, are but a floor to the highest heavens.

A second thing which shews the mighty power and wisdom of God in the stars, *is the multitude of them*, they are innumerable: Man cannot tell them (only God can) they are like the sand of the sea for number. A multitude of little sands make a huge body; then how great a body doe a multitude of great bodies make?

Thirdly, *The swiftness of their motion*, that these mighty vast bodies should be carried about every day, so long a journey, and never tire or wear, shews infinite power and wisdom.

Fourthly, This is more admirable, the exact order of their motion. That innumerable stars should move continually in the heavens, and yet not one of them move out of course: this regularity of their motion is settled by an ordinance of heaven (Jer. 31.35.) where the Lord, to assure his people that he would be steady and steadfast in the wayes of his love to them that he would not cast them off, tells them that he would be as firm to them in his Covenant, as he is in the ordinances of heaven: *Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the Moon and of the Stars for a light by night, &c.* As if he had said, I have made a statute and a degree which is irrevocable and irrevocable concerning the motion of the stars. There is an ordinance of heaven for it: so that as the celestiall bodies cannot but continue the course, I have assigned them for the enlightning of these inferiour parts, while the world lasts: So the Covenant which I have made with you shall not fail to give you light. Thus he infers in the next verse, *If these ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then shall the seed of Israel also cease from being a Nation before me for ever*; but that cannot be, I have established these stars by a firm and perpetuall decree; therefore you are much more established.

And such is the exactness of their order and motion, that the stars of heaven are frequently in Scripture called an host or an army: Now an army, as it consists of many persons (which is one reason why the stars are call an host) so an army rightly marshalled is cast into an exact form, and so regular for motion, that it is one of the goodliest sights in the world. Now the stars are the host of heaven, they stand (as it were) in battalia, they

keep rank and file; there is not so much as one of that great multitude out of place; therefore, *Judg. 5. 20.* where they are said to fight against *Sisera*, they are described fighting in courses, *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera*; as if the stars had been drawn up, now one regiment, then another regiment of them, to charge upon *Sisera* and his host: the heavens fought, and the stars fought, that is, the Lord by an heavenly power and influence of the stars confounded *Sisera*, and all the enemies of *Israel*.

Fifthly, *There is a most efficacious vertue in the stars.* It is a secret vertue, and it is a strong irresistible vertue, no power in the creature can stop it: Therefore God challenges *Job*, in the 38. of this book of *Job*, v. 31. *Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?* There are influences in the stars, and canst thou bind them? Is it in the power of any creature to stop the issues and out-flowings of the stars? Their influences are so efficacious, that none can bind them, but he that looseth them; none can bind them, but the hand and power which made them; there is so much efficacy in them, that if God let them go on in their natural vigour, their effects are wonderful. *I* (saith the Lord, *Hos. 2. 21, 22.*) *will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they shall hear Jezreel*; As if he had said, The heavens are next in power to me, they are second to my self in working, Therefore *I will hear the heavens*, the heavens cannot do it, unless I give them a commission, but *I will hear the heavens.* I will leave a power in the heavens, *And the heavens shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn, &c.* There is a gradation, a descent from God to us, and the heavens are the next receptacle, the immediate vessel, receiving and taking in power and vertue from God to defuse and send down upon the creatures here below, *I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth.*

Sixtly, observe, that the stars and constellations of heaven, can do nothing of themselves, but as they receive order & commission from the Lord

He maketh *Arcturus* and *Orion*, &c. They have great power, but it is the Lord that maketh them. That word [*He maketh*] doth not so much signifie the Creation, as the providential disposition of the stars, as was noted in the Exposition of it. *He maketh them*, that is, he orders and disposeth them, or he acts the stars, he trims up those lamps of heaven; the word is so used (*2 Sam. 19. 24.*) *Mephibosheth*, while *David* was in trouble, *had not dressed his feet*;

estoy deus.

Non tantum facere, sed etiam aptare, disponere, dirigere, et preparare significat.

the Hebrew is, *He had not made his feet*, that is, he had neglected his body; now (saith *Job*) the Lord is he that makes, dresses, or trims up those lamps of heaven: though they have a natural virtue, yet that virtue is quickned by providence. *Providence is a continued Creation. He maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades.*

The stars are the Servants of God; they receive orders and directions from him for all they do. And the reason why the Lord did so often call his people off from *gazing upon the stars*, and reproved *star-gazers*, was, because they looked no further than the stars, they thought the stars did all, they did not eye God that made *Arcturus, Orion, &c.* but they onely eyed *Arcturus, &c.* Therefore he threatens the *star-gazers and monethly prognosticators*, who took upon them to resolve future events by the conjunction of planets, and planetary aspects; placing an uncontrollable power in the hands of the heavens, and stars, whereas I (saith the Lord) *make Arcturus*: I made him, and I make him to do what I command, not what you fore-tell. Therefore (*Isa. 44. 24, 25.*) the Prophet speaking of Gods work in making the heavens and the stars, presently adds, how he befools men, that will prophesie from the stars, as if they could tell infallibly what shall come to pass. *I am the Lord that maketh all things, and stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by my self*: What follows? *That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh Diviners mad. I stretch out the heavens*: some will needs prophesie out of the heavens, I have set the stars in the heavens, and they are for signs (*Gen. 1. 14.*) but I have not set them for Prophets: if any presume to declare or resolve what shall be done, I resolve to punish their presumption. I take delight to frustrate men, who delight in this, and to befool them, who would be thus wise. This is my name, *The God that stretcheth out the Heavens alone, and that maketh diviners mad.* Great disappointments enrage: and some men lose their reason, when they lose the credit of doing things above reason. Because they cannot be as God to fore-tell good or evil, they will not be so much as men, *He makes the Diviner mad.* The Law was peremptory and severe against them. (*Dent. 18. 9.*) *There shall not be found amongst you any one that useth divination, or is an observer of times*; why not an observer of times? may we not observe times and seasons? May we not look up to the heavens, and consider their motions? Yes, we may observe times holily, but not

not superstitiously, as if some times were good, others bad, some lucky, others unlucky, as if the power of God were shut up in, or over-ruled by his own instruments and inferiour causes, this is dishonourable unto God; and thus the Jews were forbidden to use any divination, or to observe times.

The Heavens and stars are for signs, but they are not infallible signs. They are ordinary signs of the change of weather, *Mat. 16. 2, 3.* They are ordinary signs of the seasons of the year, Spring and Summer, and harvest and winter; they are ordinary signs of a fit time to till and manure the ground, to plow, sow and reap. The earth is fitted and prepared for culture by the motion of the heavens. The heavens are at once the *Alphabet* of the power and wisdom of God, and of our works: we may read there when to do many busineses, *Gen. 8. 22. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.* Those seasons shall continually return according to the time of the year, measured by the Sun, Moon and Stars. Thus, they are signs of ordinary events. And God sometimes puts the sign of an extraordinary event in them, *Mat. 24. 29. Immediately after the tribulation of those dayes shall the Sun be darkned, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken;* which, some understand allegorically; others literally of strange apparitions and impressions in heaven, either before the destruction of *Jerusalem*, or the day of judgement. So *Acts 2. 19, 20, &c.* Thus God puts a sign in them of extraordinary events.

But shall man from them prognosticate and fore-tell extraordinary events? as when there shall be famine and pestilence, war and trouble in Nations? This the Lord abhorreth. The counsels of God about these things are written in his own heart; what is man that he should transcribe them from the heavens? But if men will say, they are written there; God will blot out what they say, and prove theirs to be but humane divinations, yea, that they were received from hell, not written in heaven. (*Isa. 47. 13.*) *I will destroy the signs of them that divine, let now the Astrologers, the star-gazers, the monethly Prognosticators stand up and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee: Behold, they shall be as stubble, they shall not be able to deliver themselves. It is good to be a star-beholder, but a wicked thing to be a star-gazer; that is, to look upon the stars, so, as if we could spell out the secret providences of God, and*

F f 2

read

read future events in the book of those creatures. It is our duty to look upon the heavens, as they declare the glory of God ; but it is a sin to look upon the heavens, as if they could declare the destinies, fates and fortunes of men. All which vanities are largely and learnedly confuted by M. Perkins, in his book called, *The resolution of the Countrey-man about Prognostications.*

Philo Judæus
de epificio mun-
di.

Now, that the success of every Creature is in God, not in the stars, we may see ; first, in the order of the creation ; God created the earth, and commanded it to bring forth fruit upon the third day, but the lights in the firmament were made the fourth day : The earth can bring forth without the midwifery or help of the heavens. God himself made the earth fruitful without, yea, before the stars were made. Upon which one of the Ancients gives this observation, *Surely (saith he) the Lord in his providence made the earth fruitful in all its glory, before he put the stars in the heavens, to the intent to make men see that the fruitfulness of the earth doth not depend upon the heavens or stars ;* God needs neither the rain of the clouds, nor the warmth of the Sun to produce these effects. He that made all second causes to work in their ranks, can work without the intervention of any second cause. And because the Lord fore-saw men would dote much upon second causes, and venture to prognosticate by the heavens the fates of men, and the fruitfulness of the earth, therefore he made the earth fruitfull before he made *Arcturus*, or placed those constellations in the heavens.

Secondly, The providence of God works under the decree of God. *His providence is the execution of his decree.* Therefore we must not bring the decrees down to providence, but we must raise providence up to the decrees.

Thirdly, The heavens and those heavenly bodies, *Arcturus*, &c. are but general causes, there are special causes besides of the earths barrenness or fruitfulness, of tempests at Sea and troubles at land ; and the Lord is able to invert all causes, to work beyond causes, without causes and against causes : So that nothing can be infallibly fore-told from the positions, conjunctions or revolutions of those heavenly bodies.

Lastly, Observe, *That it is our duty to study the heavens, and be acquainted with the stars.*

In them the wonderful works of God are seen, and a sober knowledge in nature may be an advantage unto grace. Holy Da-
vid

vid was such a student (*Pf. 8. 3.*) *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained.* Consideration is not a transient or accidental, but a resolved and a deliberate act. Shall we think that God hath made those mighty bodies, the stars to be past by without consideration? Shall men only pore upon a lump of earth, and not have their hearts lifted up to consider those lamps of light? Shall man make no more use of the stars then the beasts of the earth do, namely to see by them? *When I consider thy heavens, saith David.* Heaven is the most considerable of all inanimate creatures, and more considerable then most of the animate: and *David, when, when I consider the heavens,* notes not only a certainty, that he did it, but frequency in doing it. Some of the *Rabbins* tell us, that when *Isaac* went out into the field to meditate (*Gen. 24. 63.*) The subject of his meditation was the stars, or the heavens. It is good to take field-room sometimes to view and contemplate the works of God round about. Onely take heed of the former folly, of *Astrological curiosities*, confining the providence of God to secondary causes; avoid that, and the heart may have admirable elevations unto God, from the meditation of the works of God. (*Psal. 19. 1.*) *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work;* if the heavens declare the glory of God, we should observe what that glory is which they declare. *The heavens preach to us every day. Their line is gone out thorow all the earth, and their words to the end of the world,* *Pf. 19. 4.* Sun, Moon and Stars are Preachers, they are universal preachers, they are *natural Apostles*; the world is their charge, their words, saith the Psalm, *go to the ends of the earth.* We may have good doctrine from them, especially this doctrine in the text, of the wisdom and power of God. And it is very observable that the Apostle aludes to this text in the Psalm, for a proof of Gospel-preaching to the whole world, *Rom. 10. 18.* *So then, saith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. But I say, have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.* The Gospel like the Sun casts his beams over, and sheds his light into all the world. *David* in the Psalm saith, *Their line is gone out, &c.* By which word he shews, that the heavens being so curious a fabrick, made (as it were) by line and level, do clearly, though silently preach the skill and perfections of God. Or, that we may read divine truths in them, as in a line formed by a pen into words and sentences

(the

¶ Significat
lineam, non mo-
do extensam,
hoc est, funicu-
lum, sed etiam
scriptam, hoc
est scripturam.
Par. in Rom. 10

Pro. קי ק
קל ק

(the original signifies both a measuring line, and a written line.) Letters and words in writing being nothing but lines drawn into several forms or figures. But the Septuagint, whose translation the Apostle citeth, for (*Kavam*) *their line*, read (*Kolam*) *their sound*; either mis-reading the word, or studiously mollifying the sense into a nearer compliance with the latter clause of the verse. *And their words into the ends of the world.*

Thus I have endeavoured to make those things plain, which are here represented (to vulgar ears) under strange, unusual, and hidden expressions.

Job is full of Philosophy and Astronomy, he was a great student in the heavens, doubtless, and a holy student. *Job* having given these several instances, gathers them all into a general conclusion in the tenth verse.

Verse 10. *Which doth great things past finding out, yea, and wonders without number.*

These words are repeated from the discourse of *Eliphaz*, in the 5th Chap. v. 9. *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause, which doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number.* I will not stay in a particular discussion of them, but refer the Reader to the place before cited, where the text is opened at large, and particular observations given from it. Take only this observation in general.

That, a godly man labours to exalt God, both in his thoughts and in his words, with heart and tongue, when God depresses and humbles him most.

Mark in what a condition *Job* was, when he speaks thus honourably of the name and power of God. One would think, *Job* had little reason to extoll the power of God, which he felt to his own smart; *Job* was stript of all he had, his outward comforts were taken from him, and the arrows of the Almighty wounded his very spirit. Now when he had wounded *Job* thorow and thorow, thorow flesh and thorow spirit, even at this time, when God appeared, making no use of his power but to undo *Job*, *Job* is in his *Encomium*, all in the praise and commendation of God. He endites a Chapter on purpose to set forth the power and wisdom of God, while he employed both to make his afflictions both great and accurate. This shews the admirable frame of his spirit; in all his distempers his heart stood right, and he would speak good of God, what evil soever

soever beset him from Gods hand. Let God afflict with his power, yet a gracious heart rejoices in it. A gracious heart will lift up that power which weakens and throws it down. Let the Lord employ his wisdom to undo, to impoverish such a man, to bring him into such straits that he cannot get out, yet he hath enlarged thoughts of that wisdom, *He sees God is as wise in troubling us, as he is in delivering.* That language of *Spira*, is the right language of Hell (I judge not his person, but his speech) who in a great temptation, spake thus, *I would I had more power then God, or, O that I were above God.* He was angry that God had so much power, because God used his power against him. A carnal man would be above God: especially, if God at any time puts forth his power against him. *When he is hard bestead and hungry, he frets himself and curses his King and his God, looking upward* (Isa. 8. 21.) to murmur at God, not to pray unto him, or speak good of him. It is observed by one of the Ancients concerning the Heathen, *That if God did not please them, he should be no longer God.* Such are our hearts by nature, if God do not use his power, wisdom, mercy for us, we presently wish he had no power, wisdom, nor mercy for any in the world; we would be above God, unless God will serve us: but an holy heart saith thus, Let God improve his power and wisdom which way he pleaseth, if to afflict and chasten me, yea to destroy and cast me to hell, his be the power for ever, I extoll his power. Nature can only praise God, and speak good of him, when he is doing of us good: But grace prompts the heart to indite a good matter, and bids the tongue be as the pen of a ready writer to advance God, when sense feels nothing but smart, and sees nothing but sorrow round about. *Then grace is in her heights, when she can lift up God highest, while he is casting us down, and laying us lowest:* When we can honour God frowning, as well as smiling upon us; smiting and wounding, as well as kissing and embracing us, then we have learned to honour God indeed.

Tertullian.

Illud est impiorum ingenium, ut Deum non ulterius celebrant, quam cum benefacit. Fer.

JOB

J O B Chap. 9. Vers. 11, 12, 13.

Loe, he goeth by me, and I see him not; he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.

Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who shall say unto him, What doest thou?

If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.

J O B having in the former context exalted the power and wisdom of God in many instances, and closed all with an admiring sentence, *He doth great things and unsearchable, marvellous things without number.* He, in these words seems to give a proof of those attributes of Gods works, that they are innumerable and unsearchable, &c.

Vers. 11. *For loe, he goeth by me and I see him not; he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.*

As if he had said, I am not able to reckon how often he worketh, for I cannot alwaies perceive when he worketh, I am not able to search out all his great and wonderfull a^ctings, for I cannot see him in many of his a^ctings.

He goeth by me, and I see him not.

The Lord is said to go by us, not in regard of any local motion: for, he that filleth all places, moves to none, *Do not I fill heaven and earth?* Is the Lords query of himself to those who thought to play least in fight with him. And he convinces them that they could not be hid from him in secret places, because he fills all places. There is no place to be found beyond the line of heaven and earth, both which God fills (*Jer. 23, 24.*) Then his motion is not local, but providential, *God doth not move to a^ct, but his a^ct is his moving.* He goeth by us, doing marvellous things for us, and

Mutavit, variavit, rem vel locum, denotat mutationem conditionis vel loci. Mol. in Pf. 90. 6.

we see not when he is doing, or what he is doing.

The other word here used [*He passeth on*] is of the same sense: yet more peculiar and proper to the motion of spirits, we had it in the fourth Chapter, vers. 15. *A spirit passed before me,* saith Eliphaz, when he speaks of the vision that appeared. It signifies to change

change and vary, either place or condition. The transitory changeableness of the creature, is expressed by it (*Psal. 102. 27.*) *Thou doest change them, and they shall be changed*; the creatures pass on, as from place to place, so from condition to condition, *The fashion of them passeth away* (*1 Cor. 7. 31.*) They have not only a perfective change, but a corruptive change; but of the Lord he saith, *Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.* The word is used for changing by oppressive destruction (*Prov. 31. 8.*) *Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction, or death.* Such as are appointed to that great change, are called, *a* The Sons of change or destruction: Thus the Originall. So that the word signifieth any change or motion, whether perfective or corruptive. The Lord (saith *Job*) *passeth on*, he maketh changes, he worketh sometimes to perfect, sometimes to destroy, *but I perceive him not*, I am not able to make out what he doth.

Here are two words, one referring to sense, the other to understanding, *He goeth by me, and I see him not*; that is, my senses cannot finde him: *He passeth on also, and I perceive him not*; that is, he rooteth up, he destroyeth, he buildeth, and planteth, but I am not able to apprehend him, or unriddle the meaning of his wonderful works, *He doth great things, and things unsearchable.*

b There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of these words, though I think the meaning is clear in that generall I have now given. Yet I will touch a little.

First, some interpret *Jobs* discourse conversing still in and about the *c* naturall works of God, the earth, the heaven, the waters and the air, (of which he had spoken before) as also about the body of man (*Act. 17. 28.*) *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* God is about us, he is ever with us, and yet we observe not, either when he begins to work, or resteth from working. How he is in all things, without all things, and above all things, is not known.

Secondly, Others take his *going and passing* for the acts of his *d* favour or dis-favour, *He goeth by me* in bestowing favours, and *He passeth on*, in taking them away: his accesses or recesses in mercy or judgement, his love and his wrath are often discernable, *He goeth by and passeth on*, he varieth his workings, and I perceive him not. *To pass by* is taken sometimes for sparing, pardoning, or shewing mercy. The Lord by his Prophet (*Amos 7. 8.*) reports severall judgments, from a full execution of which he was taken

בני הלוים *a*
Filiij ex d. j.
i. e. qui trahuntur
excidio
Jun. in loc.
b Non est una
interpretatio
hujus diviniac.
cessus & recessus.
Pined.
c Multa sunt
naturalia quorum
supremum
auctorem Deum,
vel opus inchoantem,
vel ab opere cessantem
non observamus,
atque ita
præcedenti
sententiæ hæc
innectitur, tanquam
illius subiecta ratio. Id.
Quemadmodum
sit in omnibus
extra omnia &
supra omnia
sibi non potest.
Olymp.
d Deum venire
miserentem est,
discedere parientem.
Phil.
Presb.
Aquinas ad
beneficia præstita
denegata
refert.
Transi cum,
quem in
punitum relinquit.
Drus.

כקרנך

In interiori tuo

Deo simpli-
cissimus est
spiritus & in-
visibilis itaque
neque nos ado-
vientes cum
venit, neque cum
abit pedem
referentem sen-
tire possumus.

off, yet at last he resolves, *I will not pass by them any more* (it is the word here) that is, I will not have mercy on them any more, I will not spare them any more, the next time I come with my drawn sword in my hand, I will be sure to smite and wound before I put it up, *I will not pass by them any more*. So [*He passeth by me*] may note here the sparing mercy of God. The Lord spareth man many times, and pardons him, not suffering his whole displeasure to arise, when man takes no notice, but is insensible of it. The word is used in this sense) *Prov. 19. 11.) It is the glory of man to pass by an offence*; that is, to spare a man that hath offended, not to punish him or take revenge: and it is ordinary in our praise of speech to say, *I will pass you by* for this time, that is, I will not take any severe notice, or strict account of what you have done. And we finde in the same prophesie of *Amos*, that *to pass thorow*, notes judgement and wrath in the opposite sense; In the fifth Chapter, verse. 17. *In all vineyards shall be wailing; Why? For I will pass thorow thee*, or I will pass into thy bowels or inwards: so the letter of the originall; that is, I will come to judge thee, I will pass thorow thee as a revenger, and wound thee deeply, insomuch that in all *vineyards there shall be wailing*; why in all vineyards? When he saith, There shall be wailing in all vineyards, it implies there should be wailing every where: for if there were joy in any place, it would be in the vineyards; vineyards, are places of mirth and refreshing; grapes make the wine, which makes glad the heart of man. Therefore when he threatens, *That in all vineyards there shall be wailing*; It is as much as if he had said, There shall be sorrow in those places where usually the greatest joy was found, or there shall be sorrow in every place. Joy shall dislodge and give place to sorrow, for, *I will pass thorow thee, saith the Lord*. So that as the work of providence in sparing, and the work of providence in punishing, may be understood by this word, with a little varying of the construction. He passeth by me in the wayes of mercy, I see him not, and he passeth thorow me in the wayes of judgment, and I see him not. I cannot see or understand him as I ought, either in wayes of judgment or of mercy.

Thirdly, we may take the words as they are an argument to prove the power and wisdom of God to be such, as man is no way able to match or to deal with all, which is the subject *Job* is upon. He would set the Lord infinitely above all that is in the creature, and he doth it here by an argument drawn from his nature. What is his

his nature? Why, he is most simple, he is a spirit without any mixture, without any composition, without any materiality, he is invisible, bodily eyes cannot behold him, therefore certainly bodies are not able to overcome him. Man being a material substance, is not able to see the Lord, then surely he is not able to contend with, much lesse to conquer the Lord; What then doth he meddling with him? It is said in the 4th verse of this Chapter, *Who ever hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?* Is flesh and blood any match for a spirit? If man should strive with god, where should he have him? *He goeth by me and I see him not; he passeth on also and I perceive him not;* I know not where to meet him, he can come upon me on every side, he may take me at all advantages, and destroy me, for I know not how to guard or defend myself. If a man were to fight with an enemy, whom he could not see, and yet his enemy saw him, what an advantage had his enemy against him? Doth any man harden himself against God? *He goeth by, and we see him not;* how then can we deal with him, or stand against him; Thus (I say) it may be an argument to make good that great assertion, *That there is no contending with God,* flesh and blood are too weak for a spirit. It is the argument which the Apostle uses, to shew that the devil is too hard for man, *We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with spirituall wickednesses, &c. Ephes. 6.* They pass by us, and we understand it not, they are now here amongst us, and we take no notice of it: We are no matches for evil spirits, much less are we able to match the most holy Spirit. *Spirituall wickednesses are strong, but spirituall holinesses are stronger.* This third interpretation renders the words a description of an invincible enemy.

Fourthly, It may be understood in the generall, to note the infinite distance which is between God and man, or the dignity of God above man, The Lord is omnipresent, he is going by, and he is passing on, he is in all places, and he acts his power and wisdom where he pleaseth. Poor man is confined to a place, to a spot of earth; when he is *here*, he cannot be *there*; but God is every where: And though God be every where, yet he cannot be seen any where he is. God sees all, himself being unseen, and fills all places, his presence being unperceived; nothing is hid from him, yet he is hid to every thing, but the faith of his own people. Thus *He goeth, and we see him not, he passeth on, and we perceive him not.*

Significatur hic summa distantia inter Deum & homines; Deus omnia videt, & rebus omnibus praesentia et efficaciam suam intervenit, homo suo affixus loco Deum non videt nisi in effectibus. Coc.

And so the whole is a confirmation and proof of the generall assertion, that the Lord is infinite in power and wisdom, and that man is an ignorant narrow-room'd and narrow-hearted weak creature compared unto him. We may form up the Argument thus :

Si quod documentum potentie et sapientie sue edat Deus ob oculos meos, non sum & qui id per-vestigare possum, adeo in-scrutabilia sunt iudicia ejus.

Jun. Transseundi et transmeandi verbis concinne significat ea documenta sapientie quae Deus exhibet, quasi praesens praesentia erudiret.

Ita significat, ex operibus Dei vix centissimum quodq; ut par est ab hominibus expendi. Pined.

Nemo potest scire an Deum habeat in se habitantem et in se manentem. Jacob. Jan son. in loc.

He is weak and ignorant in comparison of God, who cannot see or comprehend where God is, or what God doth.

But man is not able to comprehend, or see where God is, or what God doth,

Therefore man is weak and ignorant in comparison of God.

The ground is this, He that cannot comprehend or see what another doth is not able to hinder or match him in what he doth : But such is the state and condition of man, he is so far from being able to equall God in dignity, or hinder what he doth, that he cannot find out or know what God doth.

Yet this is not to be taken strictly, as if man did not at all perceive or understand what God doth. *Job* in the former context gave us a large account of the works of God, what wonders he had done. The Saints find out some of Gods doings in the world, though the blind world see not any thing he doth. But he speaks comparatively ; *The Lord passeth on, and we perceive it not ;* that is, it is little of God that we perceive ; it is little of the workings of God that we see at the best. There are many persons who doe not see him at all, and many works that are not seen at all by any person. And they, the eyes of whose understandings are anointed to see most clearly, are not able to see all that God doth. None can see all, some will not see what they may (*Isa. 26. 10.*) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see it ;* and in the former verse, *In the land of uprightness, will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord.* That which good men see is but little, and evil men see nothing. So that, as the Lord goeth altogether invisibly in his essence, so mostly in his actions ; man sees but few things of the many, and little of the great things which God doth.

I meet with a gross exposition of this text given by some Papists. *No man* (saith one of them) *can know whether God dwell or abide in him or no.* And Bellarmine in his 5th book, and 5th Chapter concerning justification citeth it to prove, *That a believer cannot know that he is justified, but must believe blindfold, or take the work*

work of justification by grace in the dark, For (saith he) God goeth by us, and we see him not; he passeth on, and we perceive him not: That is, as his gloss speaks) God cometh in favour to justifie, or he leaveth under wrath, and yet man remains ignorant both of the one, and of the other state. Surely he was at a great pinch to finde a proof for his point, when he was forced to repair to this Scripture to seek one. Providence toward mankinde (not the justification of a sinner) is the proper subject of this text. And as there is nothing for a blind-fold justification here, so many other Scriptures are expressly against it. To say that a man cannot know when God loveth him, or shineth upon him, is to contradict what our Saviour asserts, Joh. 14. 17. I will send the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. Ye know him, saith Christ to his people; the Saints see God in a spirituall sense, or in his workings upon their spirits. And though God works much upon our spirits, which we know not, yet we have a promise of the Spirit, by whom we know God in his workings. Few know when God is nigh, or when he is afar off what his goings away mean, or what his comings. But when he cometh to the Saints, they know he cometh, and when he hideth or departeth from them, they know his hidings are departures. Hence their joyes and over-flowings of comfort, when he manifests his presence; and hence their bitter complainings and cryings after him, where he seems to absent himself and hide his face: yet this Text hath a truth in it, in reference to the inward and spirituall, as well as the outward providentiall dealings of God, that sometimes, He goeth by us, and we see him not; he passeth on also, and we perceive him not.

*Alienissime
hunc locum ci-
tat Bellarmi-
nus, ut probet
nullum fidelem
scire an justi-
ficatus sit. Coc.*

Hence learn, First, That

God is invisible in his essence, and incomprehensible in many of his actions. Mans eye cannot see him: Mans understanding cannot comprehend what he doth.

But why speaks *Job* this, as a matter of wonder, if it be the common condition of man-kinde? Behold, he passeth by, and I see him not; who can see him, who can perceive or comprehend him? When *Moses* (Exod. 33. 20.) desired to see his face, the Lord answers, *No man can see my face and live*; God spake to *Moses* face to face, that is, familiarly, as a man speaketh to his friend, yet *Moses* did not, could not see the face of God. No man can see God

in

in his essence or nature : A sight of God would astonish, yea, swallow up the creature, *It is death to see the living God*; and man must die before he can see God so fully as he may, and know as he is known. But (though the face of God be invisible) yet his *back-parts* may be seen. *Behold* (saith the Lord to Moses) *there is a place by me, stand thou there upon a rock, and thou shalt see my back-parts*; thou shalt see much of my glory shining forth, as much as thou canst bear, as much as will satisfie thy desire (were it a thousand times larger then it is) though not so much as thou hast (not knowing what thou askest) desired of me. My Name shall be proclaimed, *Gracious and mercifull* &c. the back-parts of God may be seen; the invisible God discovereth much of himself to man: and shews us a shadow of that substance which cannot be seen.

Some may object that of the Prophet *Isaias*, crying out, *Wo unto me, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*, Chap. 6.5. Seen him? could *Isaias* see him, whom *Job* and *Moses* could not? *Isaias* did not see him in his essence and nature, but in the manifestations and breakings forth of his glory. *His train filled the Temple*, saith the Text (vers. 1.) or his skirts. It is an allusion to great Kings who when they walk in State, have their trains, or the skirt of their royall robe held up: 'Twas this train, which *Isaias* saw. He saw not God who was present, but he saw the manifest signs of his presence. That speech of *Isaias* seemed to favour of, and border upon highest blasphemy, and was therefore charged as an article of accusation against him; he was indited of blasphemy for speaking those words, *I have seen the Lord*, his enemies taking or resting it, as if he had made the Lord corporeall and visible with the eye of the body. And it is conceived he was put to death upon that, and one other passage in his prophecy, *Ch. 1.10.* calling the Princes of *Judah*, *Princes of Sodom*, and the people thereof, the people of *Gomorrath*.

But though God be thus invisible in his essence, yet there is a way by which the essence of God may be seen. And of that *Moses*, to whom the Lord said, *Thou shalt not see my face*, the Authour to the Hebrews saith (*Heb. 11.24.*) *That he saw him who was invisible*; the letter of the text carries a contradiction in the adjunct, it is as much as if one should say, *He saw that which could not be seen*. The meaning is, He saw him by the eye of faith, who could not be seen by the eye of sense; faith sees not only the back-parts, but the face of *Jehovah*: the essence of God is clear to that eye,

as any of his attributes, yea his essence is as plain to faith, as any of his works are to sense. Thus he is seen, *Who no man hath seen nor can see* (1 Tim. 6.16.) not the Saints in heaven: they are not able to see the Lord in his essence, *He passeth by them there, and they see him not*; in heaven we are promised a sight of him, yet not that sight, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall see God: and without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, then holy men shall see him; the state of Saints in his glory is vision, as here it is faith (2 Cor. 13.12.) *we shall see him face to face, and as he is* (1 Joh. 3.2.) These scriptures which speak of the estate of the Saints, beholding God in glory, are not to be understood, as if the nature and essence of God could be seen, for no man hath seen that, nor ever shall; but they are meant of a more full and glorious manifestation of God; *We shall see them face to face*; that is, more plainly, for it is opposed to *seeing him in a glass*; we see him now in a glass, that is, darkly, in ordinances, in duties, in his word, and in his works, but there shall be no need of these glasses in heaven. We shall have so direct and full manifestation of God, that these glasses which reflect him shall be out of use. The Saints on earth have sometimes a sight of God without a glass, that is, out of all ordinances, and promises, and works either wrought in them or for them. God comes near to their spirits, and lifts them above means, and shews them his love, and their interest in him by an immediate witness of the Spirit, (1 John 5.8.) For although the water and the bloud (justification and sanctification) never witness without the Spirit; and though the Spirit never witnesses against them, or where they are not; yet the Spirit doth often witness above them, and without them, that is, they not being called forth to give their witness. This is next door to heaven: only, the vision in heaven will be exceedingly heightened and raised, not only above our vision by ordinances, but above our vision by immediate revelation or witness.

Further consider, The sight we have of God is in Christ. God is seen in every creature (Rom. 1.) much more in ordinances, but Christ is *the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory*, Heb. 1.3. He is the *medium* by which we see God now, and some have thought we shall see him only in Christ for ever. But it is out of doubt that in this life God is seen only in Christ savingly. We of our selves, are so far off from God, that we cannot see him. There must be a due distance between the organ and the object; we are afar off from God; untill Christ bring us near; we come,
to

to, and see the *Father through the Son*. And how neer soever we are to any object, we cannot see it without an eye. We are naturally blind, the eyes of our mind must be enlightned before we see him, Christ cleareth our understandings and cures our blindness, *He is made to us of God wisdom* (to see our need of him to be made) *righteousness to us, and sanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Again, The *medium* must be light; if the eye be clear, yet while the air is dark we cannot see. There must be an outward light, as well as an inward light to see by; that Jesus Christ makes also; for *He is the light of the world, as well as the enlightner of every one that cometh into the world*. He sends the means of knowledge, as well as gives an ability to know. He sends light to the eyes of our mind, and he is light in the eyes of our mind, What we ought to know comes from him, and how to know as we ought comes from him. Without him, God goeth by us in the Gospel, and we see him not, he may pass on forever, and we never perceive him.

Secondly, Observe, *That as the Lord in his nature cannot be seen at all: So (such is the weakness of man, that) we cannot see him fully in his word, or works.*

How little is it that we see, that we know of God in either? What admirable operations are there in the course of naturall things, in the Sun, Moon, and stars, in the growth of herbs and plants, and in our own bodies, which we see not? What admirable administrations are there in the course of civil things? The beginnings, growths and declinings of Common-wealths, the transplantations of people from Countrey to Countrey, their oppressions by injustice, their confusions by War, their establishments by peace, their consumptions by plague and famine, their encrease by health and abundance are little minded by the most of men. How doth God turn Nations up-side-down, and hurl Kingdoms together, and we perceive him not. Some take no notice at all of God, as doing such things, none taking such notice as they ought. We observe creatures, what this man did, and what the other, such men were malicious and unfaithfull, such were valiant and wise, such were self-seekers, such self-deniers, such constant Patriots, and such were apostates. Thus we see men, but we seldom see God in the great transactions and motions of Kingdoms. And we see him least of all in the course of spirituall things, in his working upon our hearts; God works wonders in us, and we perceive

ceive him not! We regard not his comings or goings, his comfortings or withdrawings, when our spirits are heated, or when they are cold, when we are strong, or when we are weak: There are continual varieties and changes in our spirits, had we a clearness to make observation. The work of God in the heart of a beleiver moving it, ordering it, preserving it, comforting it, purging it, is as wonderful, and more, then any of his works in the whole world.

Thirdly, Note, *Man is not fit to sit as a Judge upon the works and dealings of God.*

Shall we judge God in what he doth, when we cannot apprehend what he doth? a Judge must have the full cognizance of the matter before him, how else can he pass sentence about it? Shall man be so bold as to get up into the throne, and pass sentence upon what God doth, when he cannot apprehend or take in evidence of what he doth? *He goeth by thee, and thou seest him not; he passeth on also, and thou perceivest him not;* And wilt thou censure what thou canst not perceive?

Fourthly, Which is *Jobs* scope,

It should be matter of great humiliation to us that we see so little of God.

God works round about us and in us, and yet we know little of him. Our blindness should abase us in our own eyes: God is all eye, and all hand, and we so blind that we cannot see what his hand doth; it must lay a man low in his own sight, to consider how little he sees of God.

Vers. 12. *Behold he taketh away, who can hinder him? who shall say unto him, What dost thou?*

This and the next verse contain a proof of man's weakness, as the former doth of mans ignorance and blindness, *He passeth by, and I see him not.* There is mans blindness, *He taketh away, and who can hinder him?* There is mans weakness. Suppose a man should see God in his works, and apprehend what he is about, yet though he hath so much light, as to see God, he hath not so much strength, as to hinder God; is not this an argument of mans weakness? What! contend with God? God doth many things, and thou canst not see him, or if thou seest him, yet it is not in thy power to stop him, *Behold he taketh away, and who can hinder him?* Yea, man is so far from being able to stop or hinder God, in

what he is about to do, that man hath not right to question God, or to ask him what he is about to do. Man is neither strong enough to stop him from what he will do, nor righteous enough to question him for what he doth. This is the total denying of any possibility in man to deal with God. How can he stop God in what he doth, who cannot so much as ask him, what he doth? *Who shall say unto him what doest thou?*

בָּרַח

Rapuit more
latronum. Sig-
nificat veloci-
tatem rapine.
Rab Mord.
Raptim auferre
Tigur.

Si rapueris ho-
minem e muta-
do. Targ.
Si morti tradi-
derit. August.
Quoties ipsi vi-
sum fuerit (ut
mibi nunc eve-
nit) quempiam
vel bonis ipsis
spoliare, quis
illum ut ropto-
rem ad restitu-
tionem cogit?
imo quis illum
jure in disqui-
sitionem voca-
vit? voluntas
enim ipsius est
justitie norma.
Bez.

שׁוּבָה

à radice שׁוּב
Vertere aut re-
ducere, quis re-
stitueret eum fa-

Behold, he taketh away.

The word signifies to take away by violence and force, to take away as a robber takes, to steal away: As if he had said, suppose the Lord come by open violence to take a thing from thee, or secretly, and as it were by stealth, to bereave thee of thy estate, or of thy life, if he take all from thee and strip the naked, *What canst thou do?* So the word is used (Prov. 23. 28.) Speaking of a wicked woman, an harlot, *She lieth in wait as for a prey*; the Hebrew is, *She lieth in wait as a robber*, to take away the estate, yea, and the life of those whom she shall entangle. Some understand this more specially of taking away life. If he will stop thy breath, and deliver thee up to death, so *Augustine* upon the place; or as the *Chaldee*, *If he take one out of the world, who can hinder him?* As if *Job* said, the Lord may not only take away so much as he hath taken from me, but more, without wrong to me. He hath taken away my goods, and my estate, my children and friends, he hath fetched away my health and strength, my beauty and outward comforts; if he come and take away my life also at the next bout, I cannot hinder him; I can neither compel him to restore, nor call him to an account; I can neither urge him to restitution, nor charge him with oppression. He plainly intimates the rapine of his goods by the *Chaldeans*, &c. Of which he spake positively (Ch. 1. 21.) *The Lord hath taken*, and here by way of general supposition, *If he take away*,

Who shall hinder him.

Mr. Broughton translates, *Who shall make him restore?* So he carries it in allusion unto men, who violently take away the goods and estates of another. If a man come with force and take away my goods, I may make him restore them again by a greater force; but if the Lord take away and ask me no leave, I cannot make him restore. The word signifies to stop or turn a thing, and because in recover-
ing

ing of a prey, or in making a man restore, we stop and stay his course, therefore the word is indifferently applied to both.

Others understand it in this sense, *If he taketh away, who shall hinder him?* that is, who can turn him from his purpose? who can stop him in the thing he hath a mind to do? The vulgar translation varies much, *If he suddenly ask a man a question, who shall be able to answer him?* The Hebrew word which signifies to return, signifies to answer, answering is the return of a word (Prov 8. 13.) *He that answereth (or returneth a word) before he heareth a matter.* But I shall lay that by, though the abettours of the Vulgar make great store of it; interpreting their meaning thus, if the Lord cite a man to judgement, and bring him to tryal, man is not able to answer him, or plead his own cause. Man cannot stand before the Lord. Observe hence,

First, that, *All our comforts are in the power of God?*

If he taketh away, supposeth he can take away, and he can take all away, and do us no wrong. It is no robbery if God rob us, his robbery is no wrong: why? because he comes not as a thief, but as a Lord and Master of our estates; he may come and take them away as he pleaseth, and when he pleaseth.

Secondly, Note this from it, *He taketh away.*

That which God doth by the hand of the creature, is to be reckoned as his own act.

He taketh away when creatures take away. It is seldome that God dealeth immediately with us in these outward providences; he sends men, stirs instruments to do what is done. But that which man doth, the Lord doth (Isa. 42. 24.) *Who gave Jacob to the spoylers, and Israel to the robbers? Did not I the Lord?* Men spoil'd and robbed them, yet it was the Lords act to send those spoilers, *Did not I the Lord?* As that which man doth in spirituals is the Lords act, when man converteth and saveth, it is the Lord that saveth and converteth; when man comforteth and refresheth by applying the promises, it is the Lord that comforteth and refresheth; when man gives resolution in doubts, it is the Lord that resolveth doubts; mans act is the Lords. So here, when man robbeth and spoyleth us, the act is from the Lord, though the wickedness of the act is from the man. The Lord suffers men to spoyl & undo us, yea the Lord orders them to spoyl us: it is done not only by his permission, but by his commission; not only with his leave, but by his appointment, *I will send him against an hypocritical*
H h 2 *Nation,*

*ciet, quis recuperabit aut re-
ducet praedam?*

*Quidam non de
præca sed de
ipso Deo intel-
ligunt. Quis
revocabit enim
à proposito?*

*Si repente in-
terroget quis re-
spondebit ei.*

Vulg.

*Vel quod re-
spondens con-
vertit se ad in-
terrogantem
vel quod re-
sponsus regre-
ditur, restitui-
aturq; tanquam
debitum inter-
roganti.*

Nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoyl, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets, Isa. 10.

Observe thirdly, *What the Lord will do, either by himself or by instruments, no man can stop or prevent.*

If he taketh away, who shall hinder him? The Lord hath absolute power, if he will overthrow men, or families, or whole Kingdoms, none can stay him. There have been four great Monarchies in the world, and the Lord coming in judgement against them, hath taken all away. The united strength of all creatures cannot stand before him, when he is angry and resolved. The Babylonian, could not say and perform it, I will keep my throne: The Persian could not say and do it, I will keep my State: The Grecian could not say and maintain it, I will keep my glory: The Roman could not say and make it good, I will keep my Empire. When the Lord had a mind to it, he came and fetcht away the power and glory, the crown and dignity of those Monarchs, he threw down their thrones, brake their states, darkned their glory, dissipated their Empires, no man could hinder him. How are ye fallen from Heaven O Lucifer, sons of the morning, how are ye cut down to the Ground, which did weaken the Nations? though ye said in your hearts, We will ascend into heaven, we will exalt our thrones above the stars of God: We will ascend above the height of the clouds, we will be like the most high; yet how are ye brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit? All that look upon you say, Are these the men that made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms? Thus the Lord hath taken away the thrones of Princes, and none could hinder; he hath also removed the Candlesticks of Churches, and none could hinder. Christ threatened the seven Churches of Asia, that he would come and take away their Candlesticks: which of these hindered him? Both Crowns and Candlesticks must down, if he speak the word. It is said, when David kept his fathers Sheep, there came a Lyon and a Bear, and took a Lamb and a Sheep out of the flock, but he arose and went out after them, and rescued both Lamb and Sheep, taking the prey out of their teeth: When the Lord Christ, the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah will come, and tear and take away, no David can rescue out of his hand. The five Kings that came against Sodom, took away Lot, Abraham went with his army and made them restore, made them bring back again; it is ordinary with man, when one hath robbed another, for a stronger to make him

him restore and vomit up the sweet morsels, which he hath swallowed. ~~It is~~ not thus with God.

First, Power cannot do it: though the instruments which he useth to take away from us be weak, yet the strong shall not be able to make the weaker restore. A weak Nation may destroy a strong Nation, and the stronger shall not be able to make the weaker restore, if the Lord send them. When the *Babylonians* encamped about *Jerusalem*, he warns them by his Prophet, do not think you shall deliver your selves by your great strength, I have sent them to take your City and your State, *And though they were all wounded men, yet they shall rise up and take your City* (Isa. 43. 13.) *I will work* (saith the Lord) *and who shall let it?* Who shall let? Why, they might say, we will have some that shall let it: No (saith the Lord) none shall let it; *Behold, I have sent to Babylon, and destroyed all their Princes*, those that sought to hinder me in my work by their power and counsel, are broken, though they seem'd as strong as iron bars (so the word is,) These bars of iron cannot keep me from entring, I will break all opposition raised against my work.

Secondly, As power cannot hinder him, so policy cannot; no counsel shall stop him: They (Isa. 7. 6.) took counsel and resolved strongly, *We will go up against Judah, and destroy it, and set a King in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal*; The Lord answereth in the next words, *It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass*: You resolve to do it, you make it out in your counsels, how to hinder mine, but it shall not be, it shall not come to pass. As no counsell against us shall stand, if the Lord be with us (Isa. 8. 10.) So no counsel for us shall stand, if the Lord be against us.

Thirdly, When the Lord is resolved to take away the peace and glory of a Nation, or of a Church, he will do it, and no spirituall means shall hinder him, prayer it self shall not hinder him. If any thing in the world can move the Lord to restore, when he taketh away the peace of a people, it is prayer and the cry of his people. Prayer hath often met the Lord, as *Abigail* did *David* (1 Sam. 25.) and prevailed with him to put up his sword, which was ready to destroy. At the voice of prayer the Lord hath restored that which he took away, and hath stayed from doing that which he seemed fully resolved to doe, Psal. 106. 23. *The Lord would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him*

in the breach. Did *Moses* out-power the Lord? did he out-wit, or out-policy the Lord? No, but *Moses* prayed, and prayed so strongly that the Lord was hindered, that is, he, as if he had been hindred, did not effect the thing, he restored their comforts again, when he had arrested but some of them, and seemed to come armed with resolution to take all away. Yet sometimes we find the Lord will come and take away, and prayer it self, prayer and fasting, cries and tears shall not hinder, God will trample upon all these. *God was resolved to take away the glory of Israel;* and to assure them that he would, he takes away that wherein their chief assurance lay, that he would not (Jer. 15. 1.) *Thus saith the Lord, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people, &c.* As if he had said, ye think to hinder me now, ye will stop me, ye will send out prayer, your old friend, which hath helped you heretofore at many a dead lift. And if you cannot pray enough your selves, you will procure prayers, and pray in the aid of prayer from all the favourites that I have in the world, ye will get *Moses* and *Samuels*, such as they, to pray for you; ye may do so, if ye will, but it shall not profit you, they and ye shall lose your labour, even these labours will not quit cost or be worth the while, to the end ye aim at, for *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, and intreated for this people, yet my mind could not be toward them: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth, such as for the sword, to the sword, and such as for death, to death, and such as for captivity, to captivity.* Thus, I say, sometimes the Lord is so resolved take away life, riches, glory, peace, the all both of persons and Nations that nothing shall help us, or hinder him, no, not the prayers and cries, not the supplications and tears of his own people, which are the strongest stops of all in the way of provoked justice. If prayer cannot stay destruction, and obtain a reprieve from death, if the prayers of a *Moses* and a *Samuel* cannot, nothing can; it is as if God had said, the best means shall fail you, therefore all means shall fail you: if when prayer cannot hinder God, we resort to other means, it is as if we should think to fasten an Anchor with a twined thread, which hath broken a cable; or to conquer an enemy with a pot-gun and a bull-rush, whom we could not with sword and Cannon. And as God will not sometimes be entreated, so he ought not at any time to be questioned; which is the next point.

Who shall say unto him, what dost thou.

That's further considerable; man is not only not able to stop the Lord from what he would do, but he hath no right to put in a plea against what he hath done, no nor to ask him what he hath been doing, or why he did it. The superiour may ask the inferiour, and call him to an account: Every inferiour Judge and Court, is accountable to those above; that is the highest Court, and he the highest Judge, to whom no man can say, *What dost thou?* The *Parliament of England* is therefore the highest Judicatory in this Kingdome, because their actions are not questionable in any other Court; one *Parliament* may say to another, *What hast thou done?* This *Parliament* hath said to *Parliaments* that have gone before, what have ye done in making such and such Laws? No power of man besides their own can question some men, much less can any man question God, and say to him, *What dost thou?* he is supreme, there is no appeal to any other higher Judge, or higher Court. Hence observe,

Whatsoever God resolveth and determineth concerning us, we must bear it, and quietly submit.

No man may say unto him, *What dost thou?* *Why do ye sit still* (saith the Prophet, *Jer. 8. 14.*) *Assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced Cities and, let us be silent there, for the Lord hath put us to silence, and given us waters of gall to drink, because we have sinned against him. The Lord hath put us to silence;* that is, the Lord hath done these things, and we are not to question him about them, or to ask him what he hath done, or why he hath done thus? Therefore let us be silent, say they. Let us not murmur at, and complain over our own sufferings, much less tax and charge God for his doings. It becomes us to obey Gods suspension; to be silent, when he puts us to silence. The Lord never silences any (unless in wrath to those who would not hear) from speaking in his Name, and publishing his Word. But he hath silenced all from speaking against works; and it will be ill with us, if our passions (how much soever God seems to act against us) shall take off this suspension. The Lord is uncontrollable in all his works. When *Nebuchadnezzar* (*Dan. 4. 35.*) came to himself, and began to think and speak like a man, after he had been among the beasts: see what an humble acknowledgment he makes concerning God; *All the Inhabitants of the earth* (saith he) are re-

puted

*Supremus judex
est a quo non
potest esse pro-
vocatio.*

*Quicquid de
nobis Deus sta-
tuit lib. noster se-
rendum est.*

puted as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, *What doest thou?* Here we have both parts of *Jobs* speech; none can stay his hand, which is the former; and none can say unto him, *What doest thou?* which is the latter. That great Monarch acknowledged he had no power to question God, though he at that time had power to question all the men upon the earth. *Nebuchadnezzar* speaks like *Job*. A wicked man may make a true report of God. Many speak right of the Lord, whose hearts are not right with him. *Nebuchadnezzar* was converted from beastliness, but I find not that he was converted to holiness. He came home to his own Court, but I see no proof that he came home to the Church of God; yet, see how divinely he speaks, and how humbly he walks, not so much as offering to ask God (who had chang'd him from a Commander of men to a companion of beasts) *What doest thou?*

We may ask the Lord (in one sense) *what he doth?* Yea, the Lord doth nothing in the world, but his Saints and servants are enquiring of him about it. He invites them to petition for what they would have, *Ask of me things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me, (Is. 45. 11.)* Though man cannot order or enjoin the least thing upon God, yet at the entreaty of his people, he is as ready to do as if he were at their command. And as we are thus envited to ask things to come, so we are not totally denied to ask about things already done. We may ask him in an humble way for information, not in a bold way of contradiction. We may in zeal to his glory, not in discontent with our own condition, expostulate with him about what he hath done. So *Joshua* (Chap. 7. 7, 8.) *Alas O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan, &c.* but how durst *Joshua* speak thus? what if God would destroy them, was it not his duty to bear it, and let God alone? Yes doubtless, and such I doubt not was the frame of *Joshua's* spirit. If *Israel* only had been to suffer, *Joshua* had held his peace, at least from such language; but he saw a further matter in it; the glory of God was like to suffer in their sufferings: the close of his prayer betrays this holy disposition of his heart, *vers. 9. And what wilt thou do unto thy great name?* As if he had said, Lord, the matter were not much, though the
name

name of *Israel* were blotted out from under heaven, so thy Name were written in fairer characters. But I fear a blow to *Israel* will be a blot to thy name, and therefore I have taken upon me to pray this prayer unto thee, and I have prayed rather for thee, than to thee. All prayers are made to God, and yet some are made for him. Not that he hath any want, or is in any the remotest possibility of any danger, but onely for the promoting of his glory, and that the world may not have occasion of a dishonourable thought of him, whose honour never abates in it self, or in the eyes of his own people. Thus we may ask him what he hath done, and why he hath brought such desolations upon his people. But we may not ask him what he hath done, either to question his right to do it, or to question his righteousness in doing of it. No creature may put the question upon either of these terms, *What hast thou done?* much less conclude, Thou hast done that which thou hast no right to do, or, thou hast been unrighteous in doing it. Either of these is highest blasphemy: for, whatsoever the Lord doth, he hath right to do, and whatsoever the Lord doth, he is righteous in doing it.

Hence it followeth by way of corollary, That
The Lord is of absolute power.

He is the *Sovereign Lord*, Lord over all; there is no appeal from him, no questioning of him. *Solomon* speaketh of the power of a King, in this language (*Eccles. 8. 4.*) *Where the word of a King is, there is power; and who may say unto him, What dost thou?* But is there nothing which a King doth, about which it may be said unto him, What dost thou? And what is this word of a King? The word of a King, is the Law of his Kingdom: all that a King doth or speaks besides the Law, he speaks as a man, not as a King; and that's the meaning of *Solomons* text; which Court-flatterers have corrupted with their unsound glosses, as if every word of a King were of absolute power, and must have peremptory obedience. A King is for his Kingdom; and while he commands according to the rules and lawes of his Kingdom, no Subject may question him, or say unto him, What dost thou? There is no power above his power, as he is armed with the power of his Laws. And because wheresoever the Word of God is, there is his Law, therefore wheresoever the Word of God is, there is power, and no man may say unto him, What dost thou? Every word of direction, spoken by God is a Law, because his will is the Law of all things

I i

and

and persons. As the will of man by nature is not subject (by obeying) to the righteous Law of God, neither indeed can be; so the will of God by nature is the subject, containing all righteous Laws, neither indeed can it not be: for though God be voluntarily, and with highest freeness righteous, yet he is righteous necessarily, and with greatest undeclinableness; As he is freely what he is, so it is impossible for him, not to be what he is. And therefore no man ought to say to God, What doest thou? seeing God can do nothing, but what he ought. In vain then is God either attempted by power, or solicited by prayer against his own mind; For,

Vers. 13. *If God will not with-draw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.*

Though, *If God taketh away none can hinder him, though none ought to say unto him, What dost thou? whatsoever he doth; yet possibly some will be venturing upon this hard task, and undertake this impossible adventure, attempting to recover Gods booty, and his prisoners out of his hand: but see the issue, If God will not with-draw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.* Suppose any should come to help, protect and patronize those whom God hath a mind to take away and destroy, shall they prosper or speed? No, not only they themselves whom the Lord hath taken away, but their assistants, and their seconds, all that appear for them (except God call in his anger) shall fall before him.

If God will not with-draw his anger.

לא שׁוּבָאֵף

Non revocabit
nasum, non redi-
bit à favore.

Avertit nasum
suum, quasi se
vinci permit-
tat, et ab his
viliante se pec-
catore fugeret.
Ipsamet victo-
ria vni nescit.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *If the Lord will not turn away his nostrils, in his face.* Nostrils or face are taken here, as in many other Scriptures, for anger, because there is such an appearance of anger in the face and nostrils, acted passion is seated there, as was noted (Chap. 4. 9.) Therefore to turn away the face or nostril, is to turn away from anger, *Psal. 78. 38. Many a time turned he away his anger; it is this word.* When the Lord is angry, the turning of his face towards a man sheweth he is reconciled; and when he is angry, the not turning away of his face, shews that he is unreconciled, or resolved to continue angry. And while God is so resolved, man is in a sad case, his helpers must stoop, *The strength of Israel will not lie or repent (1 Sam. 15. 29.)* The Hebrew is, *the victory of Israel, the Lords strength is victory; victorious persons can hard-*

ly be overcome, but victory cannot; therefore except himself will withdraw; except himself overcome himself, it is not in the power of all creatures to overcome him (*Job 23. 13.*) *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* As if he had said, except the Lord will turn himself, and alter what he himself hath determined, it is not in men to cause him to alter, *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* And what his soul desireth, even that he doth; which is the highest expression of power imaginable. How many things do our souls desire which we cannot do? We are desiring and desiring, yet our hands are not able to bring it to pass, *The desires of the slothfull (alwayes) slay them,* because (saith Solomon, *Prov. 21. 25.*) *their hands refuse to labour, and the desires of the diligent slay them,* sometimes, because they cannot compass the thing desired, with all their labour; but as for the Lord, *What his soul desireth, even that he doth.* And as his desires are irresistible, so is his anger, his irascible appetite is as victorious as his concupiscible, unless God withdraw his anger,

The proud helpers do stoop under him.

The word is, *Helpers of pride*, that is, such as think themselves most powerfull and able to help, *The helpers of pride*, or the strong helpers. The same word (note that by the way) signifies strength and pride, because we are so apt to be proud of our strength. If a man have a little strength in the world, strength of friends, or of riches, strength of body or of mind, strength of understanding, strength of memory, strong parts, he is under a strong temptation to pride. *Pride is one of the greatest weaknesses of man, but it is alwayes grounded upon supposed strength.*

וְהַיִּסְדֵּי
Invaluit robore,
insolens fuit.
Freti superbia.
Pagn.
Auxiliatores
superbiae. Re-
gia.

But who are these proud, these strong helpers?

Some understand it of the good angels, who are the strongest, the highest of created helpers: Angels stoop under the power of God as well as men.

Others expound these strong helpers to be devils, who are evil Angels, to whom evil men seek sometimes for help. If the Lord will not turn away his anger, though men seek to the devil for help (as *Saul* did) that helper shall stoop under him. *Saul* consulted with a witch (the devils oracle) yet he could not be delivered by a witch.

Others understand by these strong helpers, godly men; if the Lord will not turn away his anger, the righteous shall stoop under him,

Qui portant orbem. Vulg.

that is, they shall not be able to rescue a person or a Nation from the *anger of God by prayer*, or by the utmost improvements of their interest with God. Some places have fallen, because they wanted godly men to support them; and some places have fallen, though they had godly men to support them. The Vulgar Latine translation renders, *They that bear up the pillars of the world shall fall.* Godly men bear up the pillars of the world. Though the Hebrew will not bear their translation, yet the sense is good. Godly men are the worlds supporters. It is said, (*Rev. 12. 16.*) *That the Earth helped the woman*, that is, worldly men for carnal ends helped the Church, when a flood of persecution, cast out of the mouth of the dragon, was ready to swallow her up. But the Church continually helps the world, and swallows up many of those floods of Gods displeasure, which else would drown the world. And because the Church was so thin, and there were so few godly men in the old world, therefore it was drowned, *Gen. 7.* And because ten righteous persons were not found in *Sodom*, fire from heaven consumed it (*Gen. 18.*) God seeks for Saints many times to stand in the gap, and save a Kingdom (*Ezek. 22. 30. Jer. 5. 1.*) and yet sometimes Kingdoms are not saved, though many such stand in the gap. Except the Lord turn away his anger, *these Porters of the world* shall not support it, these spiritual *Atlas's* shall faint and fall under him. The Heathens had a fiction of a mighty Gigantine man, whom they called *Atlas*, him they fancied bearing up the frame of nature: it is most true in a spiritual sense, the Saints bear up the world; yet if the Lord turn not away his anger, the world must totter and fall too, notwithstanding these helpers. For the Saints do not bear up the world, or save Kingdoms from wrath, by giving the least satisfaction to the justice of God (that's the sole Prerogative of Jesus Christ) but only by imploring the mercy of God. Or they are therefore said to turn away the wrath of God from a people, because God will not pour out his wrath upon that people, while his Saints are mingled with them. The tares are let grow, lest in pulling them up, the wheat should be pulled up also. It is good for the worst to have the neighbourhood of those who are good.

*Perib Sol.
Et succumbent
conspiratores
pot missini.
Illi scilicet qui*

Further, More generally, these proud helpers are supposed to be Kings and Common-wealths, joyned in strongest confederacies; and then the sense is, If God come against a Nation, though it joyn with other Nations, though hand joyn in hand, the hand of one

one King in the hand of another, yet it shall not escape or go unpunished.

The proud helpers shall stoop under him.

There is yet another interpretation, which restrains and limits the word *Rahab* particularly to *Ægypt*, *Unless the Lord turn away his anger, helpers out of Egypt shall stoop under him, or Egypt helping shall stoop under him.* We find frequently in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, that *Egypt* is called *Rahab*: And that name did well sute with *Egypt*, which was both a strong and a proud Kingdom, *Psal. 87. 4. We will remember Rahab and Babylon*, that is, *Egypt* and *Babylon*. *Egypt* and *Babylon* are matcht together for pride, and for oppression, persecuting the people of God. And *Isa. 51. 9. Art not thou it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?* That is, Art not thou (O Lord) he that didst cut *Egypt* in pieces, when they opposed thy people, and woundedst *Pharaoh* in the midst of the red sea. In the 26th of this book of *Job*, verse 12. some translate *Rahab*, *Egypt*: we render the Text thus, *He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth thorow the proud*; so we, *By his understanding he strikes thorow Rahab*, that is, *thorow Egypt*, say others. And so they make that Text and this an argument, that the book of *Job* was penned after the deliverance of the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and that in these passages *Job* had reference to the mighty work of God, in destroying the *Egyptians* at the red sea. Taking the word thus, the Text is, *Unless the Lord turn away his anger, Egypt shall stoop under him*; as if he had said, *Do you not remember a late instance of Gods power? Egypt thought to contend with God, to hold his people in bondage whether he would or no, when he had a mind to bring them forth; but you know Egypt stooped: God brought down the pride, and abated the strength of it.*

And that other place (*Chap. 26. 12.*) may be glossed thus, *He divided the sea by his power*, that is, the red sea, and by his understanding he struck *thorow Rahab*; that is, when the *Egyptians* pursued his people, he destroyed them. Which interpretation carries a very clear proof that *Job* alludes to the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and therefore lived after the time of that deliverance; though others who grant the exposition, deny the inference, maintain that *Job* spake this prophetically, not historically. This we know, that *Egypt* was a place much sought to for help, and therefore

cum arrogantia & superbia auxiliu pollicentur.
Vatabl.

Superbi & eorum pironi.
Appellatur
Ægyptus hoc nomine, propter summam suam superbiam.

Ex circumstantiis horum locorum non valde incongruum est, hanc vocem sumi pro Ægypto & pro Pharaone in mare demerso. Bold. & Rab. sol.

Loquitur prophetice Bold.
Adjuvatores Ægypti, i. e. angeli ejus gentis.
Ut in prophetia Danielis, princeps Persidis.

therefore it is elegantly said, *If the Lord turn not away his anger, Egypt shall stoop*; that Nation which hath bin so often called out to help and relieve other Nations, that Nation which hath so often helped and relieved other Nations, shall not be able to help, *Isa. 31.*

1. *They go down to Egypt for help*, as if Egypt had been as a City of refuge, or the place of common resort for help. And *Isa. 30. 7.*

The Egyptians shall help in vain; the Text is very applicable to this point; we read it thus, *The Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose, therefore have I cryed concerning this, their strength is to sit still.*

Their strength shall not deliver you, they shall help in vain, therefore I have warned you (saith the Prophet) to sit still, to be quiet with your own strength, and it is better to do so than to go

down thither for help. But the word which we translate strength,

is, that in the Text, *Rabab*; and we may render the whole thus, *The Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose, therefore I cryed to them in this thing, They are proud, or only pride, Therefore sit still.*

As if he had said, Will ye go to Egypt for help? Ye go but to a proud people for help, and ye had better have no helpers, then

proud helpers, ye had better be quiet and sit still at home, for they shall help you in vain. So it is an elegant allusion to their nature

and disposition. The truth is, proud helpers are very unsafe helpers, for the Lord resisteth the proud, and I wonder how they can

help us to resist our enemies, who are resisted by the Lord himself? They will prove but ill friends to us, who have the Lord for their

Enemy.

They shall stoop under him.

*Superbia tantū
est quiesce: for
tasse vult dice-
re, nihil aliud
esse in ea quam
superbiam.*

*Est valde desi-
ci et penitus
humiliari, hoc
loco servilem
potissimum con-
ditionem desig-
nat.*

The word is often used for worshipping, it imports likewise any casting down or abasement, because we in the worship of God

ought to be exceedingly abased and humbled before him, *Psal. 38.*

6. *I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly.* So *Habak. 3. 6.* *The perpetual hills did bow*, that is, the power (for it is conceived to be

a continued Allegory) of the great Monarchs, who were as the mountains and hills of the world, bowed under the Lord. The

word is used to the same sense (*Isa. 49. 23.*) where the Lord promifeth his people, *That Kings shall be their nursing Fathers, and*

Queens their nursing Mothers, they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet. The Church shall

have the honour to be honoured by the Kings and Princes of the world, they being converted shall bow down so low to the Sce-

pter

pter of Jesus Christ, held forth by the Church, as if they would lick up the very dust, and shall employ their power and authority for the good and protection of the Church. The speech of *Israel* (Gen. 27. 29.) in his prophetick blessing upon *Jacob*, *Let thy mothers sons bow down to thee*, and of *Jacob*, in his, upon *Judah* (Gen. 49. 8.) *Thy fathers children shall bow down before thee*, note greatest honour and subjection to them both.

The meaning of all is plainly this, *That except the Lord himself suspend his own act, and restrain his anger, no power in heaven or earth, how strong, how proud, how confident of success soever, is able to force him, or to alter him. Helpers shall not help themselves, much less those to whose help they come, against the mind and purpose of God.* Observe here first,

Those passions which are ascribed to God, are fully under the command of God.

The passion of anger is ascribed to God, yet the anger which we say is in God, hath no power over God : Mans anger usually masters him ; but God is alwayes master of his anger ; that is, he can turn and with-draw his anger when he pleaseth. There is no perturbation in God ; when he is offended, he is not moved ; his motions are all without upon the creatures, he hath none in his own bosom. The passions of the Lord are his most serious counsels and determinations ; and we therefore say, he is angry because those counsels of his acted, look like the effects of anger. Secondly, observe,

That, It is not in the power of man to turn away the anger of God.

He doth not say, except men by prayer or other means stop the anger of God, but, *Except the Lord withdraw his anger all help is vain.* Prayer is said to appease the wrath of God, and to stay his anger; *Moses* stood in the gap, and *Aaron* came out with incense to turn away his wrath; yet it is an act of Gods will, which turns away his anger, not the force of our prayer; prayer therefore prevails with God, because he hath said, it shall. He is infinitely free when himself acknowledges that we lay the powerfulest restraint upon him : when the Lord is turned by prayer, it is his will to be turned ; it was his counsel, and is his command that prayer should be made as a means to turn him ; and it is his promise, that he will turn to us when we pray. Then it appears to us that the Lord hath decreed to do a thing, when he stirs up the hearts of his people to pray for the doing of it, and that he is purposed to withdraw his anger, when he draws out their hearts strongly to entreat his favour. Thirdly, observe,

That,

That, until God be appeased towards a person or a people, there is no remedy for them in the world.

The proud helpers shall stoop under him. If the helpers themselves fall, who can rise by these helpers? if they are cast down, how shall we be upheld by them? What if the people of a provoking Nation associate themselves together, or associate themselves with other Nations, or call in help and aid from all that are round about them, shall they therefore escape in their wickedness? they shall not escape. Unless God help our helpers, they are helpless to us. When many companions, and great Commanders repaired to David at Ziklag, David went out to meet them (*Chron. 12. 17.*) and said, if ye be come peaceably to help me, mine heart shall be knit to you; but if ye be come to betray me, &c. Amasai who was chief of the Captains, answers (*v. 18.*) *Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse: peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers, for thy God helpeth thee!* Our helpers cannot give us peace, unless God give them peace; our helpers must be helped by God, before they can give us help. The anger of God breaks all the staves we lean on, and makes them as reeds, which wound rather than support; till God is quiet all is unquiet, and when he is unpacified, men shall be unpacified, or their peace shall be to our loss. As if he withdraw his anger, enemies shall oppose in vain: so except he withdraw his anger, friends shall help in vain.

Lastly, They who strive to deliver those whom God will destroy, shall fall themselves before God.

If God be resolved upon the thing, not only they that are helped, but the helpers also shall stoop under him: helpers cannot help themselves when he is angry; they shall be like Idols, which have eyes and see not, hands and cannot act, either to save themselves, or those that trust upon them. The greatest strength in the world without God, it is no better then an Idol, which is nothing in the world. Strength cannot be strong for it self, and help cannot help it self. Our help stands in the Name of the Lord, which made heaven and earth, and not in the name of any creature under any part of heaven, or upon the face of the whole earth.

J O B, Chap. 9. Vers. 14, 15.

*How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words
to reason with him?*

*Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer: I
would make supplication to my Judge.*

J O B having in the former passages of this Chapter lifted up the glory and majesty of God, in his power and justice, and shewed the utter insufficiency of creatures to implead his justice, or to rescue themselves out of the hand of his power; he now draws his speech nearer home, and calling his thoughts from those remoter journies up to the heavens, and among the stars, over the mountains and hills, down to the depths of the sea, and foundations of the earth, about all which he had discoursed; I say, calling his thoughts from these remoter travels, he comes now closer to the matter, and from all those premises deduces a conclusion in the words of the Text, to vindicate himself from that charge, which his friends laid upon him, as if he were a contender with the power, or an accuser of the wisdom and justice of God: From the folly and blasphemy of both which imputations, he disaspereth himself in these two verses, by an argument taken from the greater to the less, and we may form it up thus:

*He who is so strong, wise and just, that all the powers in
heaven and earth are not able to oppose or stay him; surely I
I alone, or single I, a poor weak creature, am not able to op-
pose or stay him.*

*But (as I have cleared by those former instances)
God is so strong, wise and just, that all the powers of heaven,
the Sea, the mountains, and the pillars of the earth, the Sun,
Moon and Stars, together with the greatest and mightiest of
the children of men, are not able to resist him.*

*Therefore I poor weak creature, lying here in this sad con-
dition, am not able (nor have I any design) to do it.*

Only the conclusion of this syllogisme is exprest, in the four-
teenth and fifteenth verses, the premises are couched in the fore-
going context.

Here take notice in general, that Job falls in the conclusion

*Cum robustiss-
ma illa crea-
tura, montes,
mare, celi, ei
cedant, & que-
cunq; robore
efferuntur &
præstant, quid
minus ego?*
Merl.

somewhat below the premises. There the intendment was to demonstrate strongest creatures unable to resist the power of God; But Job speaks lower of himself, I am so far from being able to set my strength against the strength of God, that I acknowledge I am not able to hold discourse with him, or to speak with him about these things, I have not only no power to oppose, but I have no words to oppose him.

Verf. 14. *How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?*

*Si robusti nihil
valent contra
illum, quanto
minus ego debilis
et infirmus
homuncio? Drv.*

*Nunquam animo
fingi quod
vos de me fingitis,
me posse aut velle illi
ex æquo respondere. Pin.*

How much less.] The word is used in the fourth Chapter, *How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay?* Both Texts bear the same sense. *If he charge his Angels with folly, and put no trust in those his servants, then, how much less in them who dwell in houses of clay?* So the argument lies here, If those mighty and powerfull creatures, and the mightiest of the children of men, are not able to contend with God, *How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?* As if he had said, It never so much as came into my thoughts to contend with God: I confess I have complained grievously about my troubles, and have spoken some things unadvisedly, but it never entred into my heart to quarrel with God, or stand in battel array against him, no not so much as in a battel of words.

How much less shall I answer?

Shall I answer.] There is a two-fold answering, both applicable to this Text.

First, There is answering by way of fact, a real answer, or answering to a condition. Thus one man answers another that is of equal power and strength, of the same measure in abilities and gifts with him. Thus also Solomon speaks (Prov. 27. 19.) *Face answers face in the water*, that is, the face seen in the water is of the same feature and complexion, with that which looks upon the water. Thus bodies and buildings answer one another, when they carry the same dimensions: and thus money answers all things, because it bears value with every thing.

Secondly, There is answering by word, which is two-fold: First, Contradictory. Secondly, Satisfactory. The former is that which the Apostle forbids servants to use (Tit. 2. 9.) *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well*

in all things, not answering again. Servants cannot please their masters, unless they answer to what they are demanded, and they cannot please their masters, if they oppose what is duly commanded, this answering again is unseemly in servants.

The latter kind of answering is that which the Apostle Peter charges upon all Christians (1 Epist. 3. 15.) *Be alwayes ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* To answer thus is every mans duty, both to God and man. To answer by contradicting the command of God, is rebellion. To answer by satisfying the demands of God, is a duty. To answer by a proportion to the power or wisdom of God, is infinitely beyond mans ability. *Job* abhorred the first; he was ready (as well as he could) to perform the second; and therefore *Job* is chiefly to be understood of the third, *How much less shall I answer him?* That is, I do not look upon my self as a match for God, as if I had strength proportionable to his strength, or wisdom sutable to his, as if I could thunder like him, I do not think that I am able to answer his reason by my reason, no, I am so far from an ability to answer him with reason, that I know not how to chuse out words to reason with him, *How much less shall I answer him, &c.*

From the whole observe before I come to particulars,

A godly mans thoughts are lowest of himself.

Job had gone thorow the severall series of the creatures; and finding them unable to contend with God, concludes himself more unable then they. Doubtless he might have answered God as well as any. If any are able to contend with God, godly men are, they have the greatest strength; Such of them especially as *Job*, a man of that height and elevation of spirit in holiness, of whom God had given his word, That there was none like him in the earth. What creature (Except an Angel) came so nigh the Creatour as *Job*? and yet when he had looked over them all, he saith, *How much less shall I?* he thought any one might enter the lists, and contend with the Lord better then he. Man (having reason) is more able then all the irrational creatures, and amongst men, godly men, and among godly men, they who teach the highest degrees of godliness, are most able, and yet *Job* a man set upon the top and pinnacle of all perfection attainable in this life, saith, *How much less shall I?*

They of whom God hath the highest thoughts, have the meanest thoughts

thoughts of, and put the lowest rates upon themselves. No man ever received a fairer or more valuable certificate from God then Job did, and yet no man could speak more undervaluingly of himself then Job did.

Secondly, Observe, *The more we know God, the more humble we are before him.*

Job having much knowledge of God, quickly found out his own utter insufficiency to deal with God; *How much less shall I answer him?* Not, that he had less ability to answer God then others, but being more acquainted with God, and living nearer God then others, he saw his own insufficiency more then others. The more communion we have with God, the more knowledge we have of God, the less and the lower we are in our own eyes. The reason why men are so full of pride, is, because they are strangers from God, they know nothing of him as they ought. And proportionably, as any one is further distant from, or more ignorant of God, the more doth pride prevail upon him, even as humility grows more humble in proportion to his nearer approaches. When Job was yet brought nearer to God, he was more humbled, *Ch. 42. 5, 6. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee;* that is, I have a clearer and more glorious manifestation of thee to my soul then ever, I now perceive thy power, thy holiness, thy wisdom, thy faithfulness, thy goodness, as if they were corporeal objects, as if I saw them with mine eye, *Wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes;* he could not go lower in his thoughts of himself, then his expression laid him. Abhorrence is a perturbation of the mind, arising from vehement dislike, or extreamest dis-esteem. Abhorrence, strictly taken is hatred wound up to the height. As exulting is the highest act of joy, and delighting the highest act of love, so abhorring is the deepest act of hatred; and to *abhor, repenting in dust and ashes,* is the deepest act of abhorrence: Thus low Job goes, not only to a dislike, but to the furthest degree of it, abhorrence of himself, when he saw the Lord. So *Isaiah* in (the 6th of his Prophecy) when God came near him, and he saw so much of God, cries out, *I am undone, for I am a man of polluted lips;* but did not *Isaiah* know he was a sinful man, a man of polluted lips till then? Yes, but he was never so sensible of it, as then, he saw his own pollution more then ever by the light of the glory of God that shone round about him. He never saw himself so clearly, as when the majesty of God dazzled his eyes. When the Sun shines bright

bright into a room, we may see the least mote in the air; so when the glory of God irradiates the soul, we see all the motes and atoms of sin, the least spot and unevenness of our hearts or lives; this brings the soul low, and will keep it so. *The more we know of God, the more we honour him, and our selves the less.* These two are eminent effects of knowing God. As God rises in our thoughts, so we fall. *Paul* who had been wrapt up into the third heavens, and had a multitude of divine revelations, calls himself, *The least of the Apostles* (1 Cor. 15.9.) and *less then the least of all Saints* (Ephes.3.8.) not that any thing can be less then the least. The Apostles holy Rhetorick, doth not cross *Aristotles* Philosophy. But (the original being a double diminutive) his meaning is, *ελακιστοτερος* he was as little as could be, therefore he puts himself down so little as could not be, *less then the least.* *Job* speaks near him, *How much less shall I answer him?*

The Question imports an inability in him for resolution. He thought himself so much less able to answer then they, that he could not tell how much less. And therefore leaves others to cast it up, and take the account how short he was of that business; he knew it was much, but how much it was he knew not, *How much less shall I answer him?*

And choose out my words to reason with him.

The word signifies choice upon exact triall; it is used in that sense: *Exod. 17.9.* *Moses* biddeth *Joshua* choose out men to go and fight with *Amalek*; he did not take them as they came to hand, or lay his hand violently upon them to press them, but he advisedly took his choice, he had pickt men for that service. *David* gathered all the children of *Israel* he had a select company to fetch up the Ark (2 Sam.6.1.) and when he undertook the Duel with *Goliath*, the Text saith, he went to the brook and chose him out five smooth stones, they were choise stones fittest for his sling. As it is among persons and things, so among words, there are choice words: some are but rubbish, refuse words; others are precious, wise, futable words: *How should I choose out my words to reason with him?* Shall I think by setting words in a curious frame to prevail with God? or shall I by speaking rhetorically and elegantly overcome him? There is much power in oratory, in choice of words, and therefore the holy Ghost forbids the Ministers of the Gospel to speak with choice words, in that sense, namely, with rhe-

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Elegit. LXX.
vertunt per ἐκ-
λέγω & ἐπιλέ-
γω. Exod. 17.
9. cap. 18. 25.
Per ἀίρεσιν
(Job 34. 4.) ἐκ-
περαίρεσιν.
Deut. v. 6.
Hinc. ברב
juvenis ad mi-
litiā et nego-
tia electus et
idoneus.
Loqui selectis
verbis ornata
et composita
oratione.

rhetoricall and artificial strained eloquence, which naturally pleaseth the ear, and takes the heart : which kind of speech, is called, *wisdome of words* (1 Cor. 2. 17.) and *the enticing words of mans wisdom* (Chap. 2. 4.) They, having an aptness in them to entice or perswade, are called enticing or perswasive words. And because he would have little or nothing of the creature seen in winning souls, therefore the Apostle professes he used not such eloquence of words. Great Oratours have carried whole Assemblies by the ears. And least it should be thought that the Ministers of the Gospel convert men with Oratory, therefore they must not use such *choice words*. It becomes them not, like Rhetoricians and Orators, to polish their stile with an affected curiosity, and exactness of language. But as affected language is sinfull, so neglect or rudeness of speech is not without blame. We should labour to speak properly and weightily : so it becomes us to chuse our words, and not to speak till we have heard what our selves would say. And thus *Job* knew he ought to chuse his words, when he spake to God; but he knew also he could not make any such choice, either of rhetorical and perswasive words, or of logicall and argumentative words, as might fit him to answer God, or reason with him. He was assured that neither the eloquence of his stile could perswade him, nor the strength of his arguments convince him : *How shall I chuse out words to reason with God ?*

In the Original the word [*reason*] is not found ; only thus, *Shall I chuse out words with him ?* To chuse out words with another bears this elegancy, as if *Job* had said, If I should set my self to chuse words with God, he would chuse better words then I, more forceable words then I ; he is more able infinitely to make choice of words and matter to convince me, then I to convince him : For the word which we translate [*words*] may signifie not only words with which matter is cloathed, but the matter it self cloathed with those words. The sum of all is, I can neither chuse matter nor words to discourse and argue with God, his invention and judgement about both, infinitely exceeds mine.

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Significat causam aut rationem, et sic eligere verba est novas invenire rationes vel argumenta ad suam causam fulciendam.

M. Broughton refers the word [*chusing*] to *Job*, and not to words, thus, *Shall I chuse to word it with God ?* to plead and debate the business with God ? Surely of all elections I would not make that, I will not chuse to make many words with God: silence and submission I becomes me better. That's a good sense.

But

But here a doubt may arise from a passage (*Chap. 13.3.*) where *Job* speaks thus, *Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God*; how then doth he here say, *Shall I chuse out words to reason with God*? As if he had said, by no means I will not do this thing; and yet there he seems very ambitious of the attempt, and confident of the success, *I desire to reason with God*.

I answer, there is a two-fold reasoning with God. There is a reasoning of declaration, and a reasoning of contestation. When *Job* saith, *I desire to reason with God*, his meaning is only this, I desire to declare and set forth my case and condition before him. We may reason with God by way of narrative; he allows us to tell him how it is with us.

Further, *Job* speaks in that 13th Chapters comparatively, shewing how much he had rather declare his case to God, then to his friends: God was a better friend to unbosome himself to, then any of, or all his three friends; for he saith of them in the very next words, *Ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Physicians of no value*; to what purpose would it be for me longer to make known my case, and shew my grief to you? I had rather reason with God then man. But as for that other reasoning, by way of contestation and quarrelling with the providence or works of God, *Job* professeth in this place, he had no mind to it: he would never chuse that task, or set himself to chuse out words for that end, it was too high for him. He saw it was neither wisdom nor duty to deal with and undertake God, either with an open, or a closed hand, either with logical subtillties, or rhetorically flourishes.

Again, Whereas *Job* saith, he would not reason with God; it will be queried, May we not reason with God at all? The Lord himself saith (*Isa. 1.18.*) *Come let us reason together*. If the Lord calleth us to reason with him, may we not then reason with him? is it not sinfull modestly to refuse what God offers? To clear that.

I answer, There are two wayes wherein we may not reason with God.

1. We must not reason with him in our own strength.
2. We must not reason with him upon our own worth.

And that is the full meaning of *Job*, *I would not chuse to reason with God*, that is to reason with God in my own strength, as if I had

had power to deal with him. Or secondly, *I* would not reason with God upon my own worth, as if there were any thing in me upon which I were able to make it out that God ought not to deal thus with me; and that's clear by the words which follow, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not answer*; that is, *I* would not at all speak with God standing upon this bottome, or under the title of my own worthiness. In either of these wayes it is sinful to reason with God. But we may reason with God in the way of declaration before spoken of.

In prayer there is a reasoning with God; and the reasonings and pleadings that are in prayer, are the life and strength of prayer. Prayer is not only a bare manifestation of our mind to God, by such a sute or petition; but in prayer there is, or ought to be a holy arguing with God about the matter which we declare, which is a bringing out and urging of reasons and motives whereby the Lord may be moved to grant what we pray for. The prayers of the Saints recorded in Scripture are full of arguments.

I shall shew it in one example, as a tast for the rest; *Jacob* in his distress at the approach of his brother *Esau*, flees to God in prayer (*Gen. 32.*) and he doth more then speak in prayer, he argues, yea, he wrestles with God in prayer. The sum of it is set down (*vers. 11.*) *Deliver me I pray thee*; to the undertaking of this deliverance he urgeth the Lord by no fewer then seven arguments. First, from Gods Covenant with his Ancestours, *O God of my father Abraham*, &c. As if he had said, Remember those names with whom thou madest solemn Covenants of protection both to them and their posterity. The second is from Gods particular command for his journey, Thou saidst unto me, Return, I departed not on my own head, but by thy direction; and therefore thou canst not for thy honour, but free me from danger, seeing at thy word I am fallen into it. Thou O Lord, art even engaged to give me defence, while I yield thee obedience. Thirdly, He puts him in mind of his promises, thou saidst, *I will deal well with thee*, and that includes all other promises made unto him, these he makes as a bulwark to defend, or as his anchor in the storm. This anchor must fail, and this bulwark be broken down before the danger come to me. If thy promise stand, I cannot fall. The fourth is the confession of his own unworthiness. Faith is alwayes humble, and while we are most confident in Gods word, we are most distrustful of our own desert, *I am not worthy of the least*

least of thy mercies. Though I am thus bold to urge thy Covenant, yet I am as ready to acknowledge my own undesert; Thou art a debter by the promise thou hast made to me, and not by any performance of mine to thee. Fifthly, He seeks to continue the current of Gods favour, by shewing how plentifully it had already streamed unto him; which he doth by way of Antithesis, setting his former poverty in opposition to his present riches, *With my staff I passed this Jordan, and now I am become two bands*; That is, thou hast blessed me abundantly, and shall my brothers malice blast all? am I encreased only to make him abound? The sixth argument is, the greatness and eminence of his peril, verse 11. *I fear least he will come and slay the mother upon the children*; a proverbial speech in the holy language, like that of cutting off branch and root in one day, both denoting totall excision, or an utter overthrow. Seventhly, He shuts up, by re-enforcing the mention of the promise, which he urgeth more strongly then before; there it was only, *Thou saidst, I will deal well with thee*; but here it is, *Thou saidst, in doing good, I will do thee good*, that is, as it is rendred in our translation, *I will surely do thee good*, and therefore let not my brother doe me evil. We see *Jacobs* praying was a reasoning with God, and himself in the issue got not only a new blessing, but a *new name*, *Israel, a Prince with God, and a prevailer both with God and men*.

And thus we may reason with God in the strength, and for the sake of Christ in all our prayers. For as when God calls for our obedience, he usually adds perswasion to his precept, and reasons with us, as well as directs us; His commands are not alwayes barely authoritative, and the resolves of his prerogative: So, when we call upon God for audience, we should adde perswasions to our petitions, and reason with him, as well as entreat him. Only we should be carefull to reason from right Topicks, and heads of argument, such as these,

First, From the freeness of the grace of God.

Secondly, from the firmness of his promise.

Thirdly, From the greatness of our need, or of the Churches misery.

Fourthly, From all the concernments of his own glory, &c. Thus we may reason with God for the doing of any thing we ask according to his will; and in these reasonings, the spirit, life and strength of prayer consists.

So then, the only thing which *Job* declineth, as sinfull and unbecoming, is, to reason with God as a contender, he might humbly reason with him as a petitioner, or as a remembrancer, *Put me in remembrance* (saith the Lord, *Isa. 43. 26.*) *Let us plead together: declare thou that thou mayest be justified.* We may declare our cause, and we need not fear to declare our sins, that God may justifie us; but we must not presume to declare our righteousness, that we may justifie our selves: this *Job* disclaims.

How much less shall I answer him, and choose out words to reason with him?

Towards the further clearing of these words, we may take notice that *Job* puts himself under a double relation. In the former part of the verse he puts himself in the Respondents place, *How much less shall I answer him?* And in the latter part of the verse he puts himself in the Opponents place, *and chuse out words to reason with him.* His meaning is, If the Lord will object against me, I am not the man who dares, or is able to answer him. And if I should take upon me to object against the Lord, the Lord may, and can easily answer me. From which notion of the words, two points may be observed.

First, *No man can answer what God hath to object against him.*

The Lord hath a thousand arguments which we are not able to give him satisfaction in (as was touched in the beginning of this Chapter, *vers. 3.*) *We cannot answer him one of a thousand.* If God should cast a man to hell, what hath he to say for himself, as from himself, when God objects, *Thou hast sinned;* if God afflict a man and lay him low, giving him this argument for what he doth, *I am thy Creatour; I formed and made thee: if I break thee to peeces,* what canst thou say against me? If the Lord should say, *I am thy Sovereign,* I have supreme power over thee, may I not doe with thee what I will? What hath man to answer? Man must be silent, and lay his hand upon his mouth: he hath not a word of reason, or holiness to reason against God in any of his dispensations.

Let man (on the other side) gather as many arguments as he can to object against God, he is able to wipe them all off presently, to blow them away with a breath. All the shifts and apologies, the excuses and arguings which any make for their sins, or which they make for themselves against the justice and wisdom of God,

God, are answered with a word. So that, put man in the opponents, or in the respondents place, he can make no work of it. ras to

Secondly, Observe from this phrase, *Shall I choose out words to reason with him?*

God is not taken with words.

Fine phrases and eloquent speeches will not carry it with him, *If we would prevail with God, we must speak our hearts to him, rather than our words*; yet we ought to chuse out words (as was touched before) when we speak to God. As we must take heed how we hear, while he speaks, so we have need to take heed what we speak in his hearing. That's *Solomons* advice, Eccles. 5. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.* That is, speak not vainly and unadvisedly, thy tongue running before thy wit. Let wisdom guide thy tongue, and let thy heart shew thee wisdom; *Let not thy heart be hasty to utter*, when it's office is to conceive, not to utter. But how can the heart be hasty to utter? Utterance is the business of the tongue. The heart is then hasty to utter, when it suffers the tongue to utter what it self hath not thorowly concocted by meditation, and made its own. As in the body, so in the mind, the third concoction is that which nourishes and assimilates. So then, *Solomons* meaning is; *Let not raw, unboiled, undigested thoughts, pass out into discourses, or be stamp't into words before the Lord.* As there is a sin of curiosity; so there may be a sin of neglect. *Extreams are equally dangerous.* The distance that is between God and us, proclaims this duty of our most reverent addresses to him. *He is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few*; and yet the fewness of words pleases God no more then the multitude of them doth. We say, *In many words, there can hardly be a scarcity of errors*; and in a few words there may be a few errors, possibly more errors then words. *Fewness*, simply taken, is not the grace of words. But, because they who speak but little, doe usually think the more, and so their words are steep long in their hearts, therefore few words are usually *choice words*. It is sin, if we are well conceited of our words. And it is sin, if our words be not our best conceptions. *How shall I chuse out words to reason with him?*

Verse 15. *Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer; but I would make supplication to my Judge.*

This brings the matter to the height; Who? I reason and plead with God? I answer him? No, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not answer him.* The strength of the argument lies thus, as if Job had said, *I am so far from entering a contest with God, that I profess I would not do it, though I had the greatest advantage and fitness to do it of any man in the world; though I were righteous I would not do it.* I do not say, that the reason why I would not plead with God, is because I am wicked, sinfull and abominable, more guilty and unrighteous then my neighbours, or then you, my friends, but how righteous soever I were, I would not do it. Job speaks as a man who would shew how much he dreads the power and strength of another; *What I fight with such a man? I contend with such a man?* No, I profess I would not fight with him, though I were as well weapon'd, arm'd and prepared, as any man in the world, I would not come near him. If there be any armour or weapon, and furniture or preparations which may enable man to contend with God, it is the armour of righteousness, and the furnitures of grace. Now, saith Job, though I had that armour, *Though I were righteous I would not contend with him.* The Apostle argues much after this rate (1 Cor. 13.) about that great point of Gospel-charity, where he telleth us, that all things are as nothing without charity: and he instanceth in those things which stand highest in the thoughts of man, to commend him to the acceptation both of God and man, vers. 2, 3. *Though I have the gift of Prophecie, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and though I should give my body to be burned, and have not love, what would it advantage me? Though I should give all my goods to the poor, and have not love, &c.* It is possible for a man to give away abundance to the poor, and yet have a dearth of love both to them and to God in his heart: all the love that moveth him may be love to himself; therefore (saith he) *Though I give my goods to the poor, it profits me nothing;* he puts all these suppositions, which are the greatest advantages for heaven (except Christ) imaginable, and yet concludes all, but as sounding brass, or a tinkling Cymbal, nothing but noise without charity. So here, to shew how impossible a thing it is for creatures in their own strength to contend with God, he puts a supposition upon that
which

which is most probable to carry us thorow it, *Righteousness*,
Though I were righteous I were not able to answer him, no not I.

Though I were righteous.

It is, as if *Job* had further exprest himself to this sense; I am so far from justifying my self in all my complainings (which was the things his friends taxed him with) as if God could finde nothing amiss in what I have spoken, that I freely confess there is not the most considerate, righteous or holy action that ever I did in my life, which I durst bring to the touchstone, to the balance, to justifie my self before God by no, but instead of that I would fall down and abase my self as knowing I am before him, whose eyes (being ten thousand times brighter then the Sun) are able to see unrighteousness, where I see nothing but righteousness: Doe not think I am justifying my self as a righteous man in what I have spoken or done for though I were righteous yet I would not (upon that ground) goe about to plead my cause or stand it out with God. Or thus, I know I am unrighteous and unclean, but if I were righteous; I would not answer him.

Here a Question or two must be resolved: As,

First, *Was not Job righteous?* He puts the Question, *Whom, though I were righteous, was Job an unrighteous man?* Doth not he himself say (Chap. 29. 14.) *I put on righteousness, and it cloathed me?* Why then doth he here only make a supposition of it, *Whom, though I were righteous*, when as there he makes it a position, that he was cloathed with righteousness.

I answer (to clear this Scripture) Man is righteous in a double opposition. Righteous; first, in opposition to the wicked: and these may be taken in three ranks, either, First, the abominable and profane: Or, secondly, hypocrites and unsincere: Or thirdly, oppressours, & such as are unjust in their dealings toward men. As righteous is opposed to wicked in these three, *profane, hypocrites or oppressours*, so *Job* was a righteous man. *Job* was not profane, he feared God: *Job* was not an hypocrite, he was perfect and upright: *Job* was not an oppressour, the loynes of the poor blessed him. And that's the peculiar sense of the 29th Chapter, *I put on righteousness*, that is, righteousness in all my dealings with men.

Secondly, Righteous is opposed to imperfect, or that which hath any failing or want in it. And in this sense *Job* was not righteous; and that's his meaning here. *Though I were righteous*; that is, though I had the uttermost perfections which a creature is capable

ble of, yet I would not stand upon them, and plead it out with God. The testimony which the Lord gave concerning *Job* (Chap. 1. 1.) is in words of an inferiour sense: this in the Text is above them both. The Lord there certifies, that *Job* was perfect and upright. But though he was perfect and upright, yet he was not righteous. He was perfect in opposition to insincerity, and he was upright in opposition to injustice, but he was not righteous in opposition to imperfection; *If I were righteous*, as I know I am not.

Iustus in judicio opponitur improbo reo, qui causa cadit.
Drus.

Further, Righteousness is twofold. There is a righteousness of the person, and a righteousness of the cause, *Though I were righteous*: *Job* doth not forsake the righteousness of his cause, he only disclaimeth the righteousness of his person. I acknowledge I am not righteous in my self, and I will not yield that my afflictions and sufferings argue me unrighteous.

Cum hic iustitiam sibi tribuit, non de ea agit, quæ ad legem normam possit subsistere: Solum enim Dei tribunal severissimum Christi iustitia non reformidat; sed agit de iustitia inchoata, quæ quantumvis Deo grata sit, non tamen ad omnissimam respondet perfectioni illi, quam lex requirit. Meel.

Here another Question arises, for if we take *Job's* supposition of a man righteous, it will be demanded, May not a righteous person answer God?

I answer, There is no created righteousness can answer God. God chargeth his Angels with folly; he saw evil in them, compared to himself. A righteous Angel cannot stand it out with God, much less the most righteous man. God indeed would have accepted man in the righteousness of works, had he continued in innocency; and yet he might have seen folly in man abiding in innocency, as he doth in those Angels, which continue innocent. No created righteousness can answer God.

But there is a righteousness in which we may answer God; *Job's* supposition excludes not that, namely, the righteousness of faith which we have by Christ. Man righteous by faith, or by imputed righteousness, may answer God; but man righteousness by works, or inherent righteousness cannot. He that is righteous by the righteousness of faith, hath to answer God, because he hath somewhat of God to answer God with. Faith doth not bring man to answer God, but God to answer God; Christ answers God for every believer: and Christ can answer God fully to all the demands of justice, without abatement. Christ hath not compounded with our creditour, for our debts, but paid them to the utmost farthing. A believer is able to answer God, and doth answer him every day: when he asks the pardon of sin, he offers the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And that which he offereth by faith, he will stand to and plead with God upon; God hath what he can desire,

desire, or his justice expect; the believer bids him try to the uttermost, if there be any imperfection or flaw in it, he will venture his soul upon it. In this sense man answers God. But Job speaks about inherent personall righteousness, righteousness of his wayes. Upon this he will not venture a hair of his head, much less his soul and everlasting peace.

Though I were righteous I would not answer him.

There is somewhat further considerable, for as [righteous] is a judiciary word, so likewise is [answer.] And it implies, that Job he would not only not answer God objecting or reasoning, but that he would not answer him, accusing or charging him, judging or sentencing him. I must acknowledge my self to be, what God judgeth me to be, and that I am worthy to suffer what he judgeth me to suffer.

Hence observe, First, Job having shewed the weakness and ignorance of the creature in his former discourse, here you see whither it tended, namely, to prove man to be sinfull and unrighteous. This teaches us,

That all the failings, infirmities and weaknesses which are in man, are the issues and effects of the sin of man.

Man is an unrighteous creature, therefore a weak creature. Job argues from the effect to the cause, from the fruit to the root: man hath infirmities upon him, therefore he hath sin in him. Where there is no sin, there is strength, and where there is no sin, there is knowledge. Perfect holiness scatters all the clouds of darkness and ignorance.

Secondly, *Though I were righteous I would not answer him;* then it follows, *Unrighteous men cannot answer God.*

If a righteous man cannot, can an unrighteous? No marvel if David saith in the first Psalm, *The wicked shall not stand in judgment,* for (in a sense) the righteous cannot stand in judgment, that is, they cannot plead their own righteousness before God. Wicked men have nothing to help them, no help without, and none within, they have nothing but sin in them, and they have no Saviour without them. Hence the Apostle Peter argues (1. Pet. 4. 18.) *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* If Abel be not able to answer God, how shall Cain? If David cannot, how can Saul? They who have not the righteousness of Christ, have nothing but unrighteousness of their own.

Thirdly,

Respondere, verbum est forensic, &c. Sanct. Si ille me arguet, aut in me sententiam feret, etsi causa mea justa sit, non audebo, illi, respondere aliquid obijicienti, aut in me pronuncianti: me enim rationibus obruet, & sua opprimit majestas. Merc. Ex effectibus causam declarat, unde enim tanta in mentibus hominum caligo & inscitia, unde tanta infirmitas corporum & animarum, nisi a peccatore. Merc.

Thirdly, Observe the vast difference that is between the spirit and temper of a godly man, and of a wicked man. O the humility of *Job's* spirit! *Job* will not justify his own righteousness, or justify himself in his righteousness. A wicked man will justify his sin, or justify himself in his sin. A *Saul* will justify his disobedience, but a *Job* will not justify his obedience. *Job* will not take upon him to be a righteous man; though God had told him he was perfect and upright. A wicked man will take upon him to be righteous, though God tell him to his face a thousand times, that he is vile and filthy. How doe wicked men seek for pleas and covers to make themselves appear righteous! How doe they gild the base metall of their hearts, and paint over those rotten posts to make them appear beautifull! Christ tells the Pharisees that they were like filthy sepulchers full of dead mens bones, yet they would be painted over with the notion of a righteous generation. *Job* who had much righteousness and faithfulness in him, would not own them, and modestly blushes at the praise of God, *Though I were righteous, yet I would not answer.*

Fourthly, Observe, *the righteousness of man is not pleadable before the righteous God.*

Though I were righteous, yet I would not answer. The Apostle (1 Cor. 4.4.) gives a parallel testimony, *Though I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified.* Paul knew nothing by himself, that is, he had not any guilt upon him that he knew of; he did not allow himself in any sin, but kept his conscience void of offence, both toward God and toward man; yet (though it was thus with him) he disclaims all opinion of himself, *I am not hereby justified*, this is not the plea I have to make before God; he is able to find out failings where I finde none, he knows better then I what I am.

Fifthly, Observe, *A godly man looks upon his own righteousness, as no righteousness.*

Whom, though I were righteous I would not answer. His supposition hath negation in it, *I am not righteous.* *Job* did not deny the work of the Spirit, or the grace of God in him; but he would not own them in his pleadings with God. He could stand upon his terms with men, and let them know who he was, and what he had done (and it was reason he should) but before God he had nothing to mention but Christ: In reference to the higher degree of grace for sanctification we must forget all that is behinde, and

and press on to that which is before: And in reference to the whole grace of justification, we must forget all our sanctification. The less we remember our own righteousness, the more righteous we are in Christ. As we abate in our selves, we encrease in him. Christ draws the picture of an hypocrite to the life (*Luke 18.*) in that parable of a Pharisee and a Publican, going up to the Temple to pray; and the design of Christ in that Parable, is held forth at the ninth verse, to be the conviction of such as trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. Now what did this Pharisee? He thanks God he was not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or as that Publican, and then he minds God that he gave tithes, and kept fasts twice a week. And so makes a goodly report of himself, both in the negative and in the affirmative, what he was, and what he was not. Never did any good man tell God such a story of his own life, as this Pharisee told. The Saints love to do well, more then to hear well from others, much more then to hear well from themselves; they love to do good, more then to receive good; much more, then to speak good of themselves. When Christ is represented sitting in judgement (*Mat. 25. 35.*) he tells the faithfull of all their good deeds, or acts of charity, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was a thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me, &c.* Hear how the Saints answer, as if they had done no such thing; *when was this Lord? when saw we thee hungry and fed thee? &c.* We have forgot the time. They did so little mind the good they had done, that they remembered not they ever did it. The Lord keeps a faithful record of what his people doe, but themselves do not. It is our duty to remember to do good, but let God alone to remember the good we have done. *The Lord is not unrighteous to forget our labours of love.* (*Heb. 6. 10.*) but we lose our righteousness, unless we forget it. If we much remember what we do, God will remember it but little. The servants of God know well enough when they do good (to do good ignorantly, is a degree of doing evil). They know when they do good, and they know what good they do; but when 'tis done, 'tis to them as unknown.

Hezekiah (*Isa. 38. 3.*) put God in mind of his good deeds, Lord (saith he) remember how I walked before thee with an upright heart, &c. Hezekiah desired the Lord to remember his uprightness. So Nehemiah in divers passages of that book (*Neh. 13. 14. 22. 29. 31.*)

puts the Lord in remembrance of his righteousness. But it is one thing to put the Lord in remembrance of what we have done *historically*; and another thing to plead what we have done *legally*. Its one thing to shew to the Lord the work of his own grace in us; and another thing to mind the Lord of our works to obtain his grace. *Hezekiah* would have God to take notice of what he was to pity him in his sickness, Lord, I am thus, remember the work of thy hands, as I am thy creature; remember the work of thy Spirit, as I am a new creature, as I am thy servant. And *Nehemiah* puts all upon the score of mercy: He did not say, Lord, remember me for what I have done, answer me according to what I have done, but, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy* (Chap. 13. 22.) If Saints at any time remember God of their works, it is not to ground an argument of merit upon their works, but to shew God the workings of his grace and spirit.

Though I were righteous I would not answer him; What then? What will Job do? What course will he take for himself, if he will not answer the Lord? What? This course he takes, and it is best.

I would make supplication to my Judge.

τὴν κριματίζω
αὐτὸν Ἀνθρῶ
παι. Sept.

The Septuagint render it thus, *I would deprecate his judgement*; that is, I would sue for mercy. As if he had said, I am not without hope, because I have none in my self: I am not lost, because I am lost to my self: I have a sure way yet left, *I will make supplication to my judge*; or as M. Broughton reads it, *I would crave pity of my judge*: as if he had said, though justice cast me, yet mercy will relieve me. Mercy will help me as well, & honour God more.

וְשָׁמַע
Ad facientem
judicare me.
Mont.
Eum qui me
judicare facit.
Pagn.

The word notes humblest submission, as when a man begs for his life. *Jacob* (Hos. 12. 4.) *wept and made supplication*. The brethren of *Joseph* (Gen. 42. 21.) were exceedingly afflicted at the remembrance of their hard usage toward him their brother when they sold him to the *Egyptians*. We would not hearken when he besought us; it is this word. Think with how much submission, *Joseph*, being ready to be sold unto strangers, supplicated his brethren for pity: Or how a man will lie begging at an enemies feet; who is ready to kill him. With such submissive language *Job* resolved to crave pardon and pity at the hands of God.

Thus he obeys the counsel of *Bildad* in the 8th Chapter, *If*
thou

thou seek unto God and make thy supplication unto him betimes. Job seems to answer, Your counsel is good, friend Bildad, *Though I were righteous, I would not answer him; but (according to your advice) I would make supplication to my Judge.* The prayers of the Church in greatest straits and distresses, are usually expressed by this word [*supplications*] *All petitionary prayer is supplication; but because we are much abased, & laid very low at such times, therefore prayer then put up, is specially called supplication.* Hence Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, putting cases and suppositions of many afflictions incident to that people, still concludes, *At what time they shall confess their sins and pray, and make supplication, then, &c.* (1 Kings 8.) And (Esth. 4. 8.) Mordecai sends to Esther, charging her to go in to the King, *What to do? To make supplication unto him.* The lives of the Jews being given away to satisfy the malice of Haman, it was time for her to supplicate in the lowest posture. Thus Job had it in the thoughts of his heart to make supplication to his Judge; as if he had said, *If I were to stand at the tribunall of an earthly Judge, I would not supplicate, but plead; I would not petition his favour, but stand upon my right; I would not crave his pity, but expect his justice; I would bring forth my reasons and arguments, my proofs and witnesses, this course would I run with an earthly Judge: but my cause being with God, I will only put a petition into the Court, and submit unto him, let him do with me what he pleaseth.* Hence we may observe,

First, *That there is no weapon can prevail with God but only prayer and supplication.*

Jobs thoughts had travel'd thorow all the creatures and found not one of them could stand before God; therefore he resolves to fall down before him. *I will make supplication. Prayer overcometh when nothing else can.* Christ conquered by dying, and we conquer by submitting. And yet it is not supplication as an act of ours; but supplication as it is an ordinance of Gods that prevails with him: he looks upon prayer, as having the stamp of his own institution; otherwise our greatest humblings could prevail no more then our proudest contendings. The Word preached prevails upon the hearr, not as it is the act of a man, who dispenseth it (there is no strength in that) but as it is an ordinance of God, who hath appointed it: So humble supplications obtains much with God, because he hath said it shall.

Est opus virtutis exereuero ad vitam, non ex meritis, sed ad veniam conualefco. Preci itaq; innitendum est cum recta agimus, ut omne quod iuste vivimus, humilitate condiamus.
Greg.

Secondly, *To make supplication is to crave pity.*

As prayer prevails, so no plea in prayer can prevail, unless we plead *pity, pity, mercy, mercy*; a suppliant looks for all good at the hand of free grace. We at any time have sin enough to procure us evil (Jer. 4. 18.) *Thy sins have procured these things unto thee*: But we never have goodness enough to procure us any mercy. Mercy comes for mercies sake.

Thirdly, In that he saith, *I would make supplication to my Judge*, Observe,

God is the Judge of all our actions and intentions.

Job was in a great contest with men, but (saith he) men are not my Judges. God is my Judge. *It is a comfort to the Saints to remember that God is their Judge.* *Job* was not afraid of God in that relation; no, it was a rich consolation to think that God was his Judge. He is a righteous Judge, a mercifull Judge, a pittifull Judge; we need not be afraid to speak to him under that notion. *Job* saith not, I will make supplications to my father (which is a sweet relation) but (which is most dreadfull to wicked men) he considers God as a Judge: The Saints are enabled by faith to look upon God as a Judge, with assurances of mercy.

Lastly, Observe, *The whole world stands guilty before God.*

(Rom. 3. 19.) *Every mouth must be stopped*: *Job* will only make supplication, he had nothing else to do or say, *We do not present our supplications unto thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercy* (Dan. 9. 8.) We can get nothing from God by opening our mouths in any other stile, or upon any other title then this, of an humble acknowledgement of our unworthiness: the lower we go in our own thoughts, the higher we are in the thoughts of God; and we find the more acceptance with him, by how much the less acceptance we think we deserve. *Nothing is gained from God, either by disputing or by boasting. All our victory is humility.*

J O B, Chap. 9. Vers. 16, 17, 18.

If I had called, and he had answered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice.

For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.

He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.

THis holy man having abased himself in the sense of his own inability and unrighteousness before the Lord, and disclaimed the least intendment of contending or disputing with him (as was seen in the former context) now confirms it by a further supposition, in the 16, 17, 18. verses, and so forward. As if he had said, Ye shall find I am so far from warring it with God, or standing upon mine own justification with him (though I have pleaded mine integrity before you my friends) that I here make this hypothesis or supposition, *If I had called, and he had answered, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice.*

There is much variety in making out the sense of these words.

The Septuagint read it negatively, *If I had called, and he had not answered me, I would not believe, &c.* Most of the Hebrew writers

fall very foul upon Job, and tax him harshly for this speech. *What?*

Would he not believe that God hearkned unto him, when he had answered him? is not this unbelief a plain denial of providence, or at

least of special providence? *I would not believe that he had heark-*

ned unto my voice, is (in their sense) as if he had said, I think God

takes no care, or makes no account of particulars, he looks not after

this or that man, what he speaks, or for what he prays. I can scarce

believe that my condition is under the care of God, or that he will take

notice of me, if I should call upon him; or if I plead before him, what

shall I get by it? Do ye think he will descend to the releif of such a

one as I am? Why then do ye move me to call upon him? &c. If I should

pray, and if he should answer me, I can hardly be persuaded that he

will pity me and do me good.

A second opinion casts him into the deeps of despair; as if Job

had altogether laid aside hope of receiving any favour by calling

upon God, or of comfort by putting his case to him.

But

ἴαν καλέσω,
καὶ μὴ ἀ-
κούσῃ, Sept.

Anæ loliginis
saccum hic a-
spersit. Rab.
Levi.

Afferens so-
bu n negare
providentiam
sive curam par-
ticularium.

Coc.

Verba diffiden-
tis et desperan-
tis de divina
misericordia.

Opinio Rab.

Moyse et R.

Levi. apud.

Merc.

Judaicum commentum, atq; Jobi sanctitate indignissimum. Pined.

But all these aspersions are unworthily cast upon *Job*, a man full of humility and submission to the will of God: his frequent prayers and applications of himself to God do abundantly confute all such unfavoury conjectures. But the Jewish Commentatours carry on their former strain, being all along very rigid towards this holy man, very apt to put the worst constructions upon doubtful passages, and sometimes ill ones upon those which are plainly good.

More distinctly.

There is a difficulty about the Grammaticall meaning of one word in the text, which carries the sense two wayes.

If I had called, and he had answered me.

נִקְרָא Alij, invocare, alij provocare vertunt.

The Hebrew word which we translate [*call*] signifies sometimes to pray, and sometimes to plead or challenge: An act of invocation, or an act of provocation: it is rendred both wayes here. By most, as we, *If I had called upon him*; that is, if I had prayed or made my sute unto him. By some, *If I had sent in my plea* (as to begin a sute of law with him) or my challenge, as to enter the combate with him, &c.

As it is taken for a challenge, so the sense lies thus, If I should stand upon terms with God, and call him to an account to make good what he hath done; *And he had answered me*; that is, if he had condescended to give me an account of his wayes, yet I would not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice, that is, that he had yielded to me, or acknowledged that he had done me wrong. Shall I, who am but dust and ashes, prevail in my sute and get the day by pleading and contending with the great God of heaven and earth?

Take the word as it signifies invocation, or calling by way of petition (Psal. 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.* And so two or three interpretations are offered.

Tam infirma est caro, ut etiam proposita divinis promissis non audeat credere. Isidor. Clar.

First, Some in favour of *Job* conceive that he speaks this only through the infirmity of his flesh, that it was sin within him that spake, and not *Job*; according to that of the Apostle, Rom. 7. *Not I, but sin that dwelleth in me*: So *Job* speaks as if he did not beleive that God would hear him when he pray'd, but whose voice was this? Not *Job's*, but his sins, the corruption, the infirmities of *Job* gave out such language, not he. As we may say in refer-

reference to an action, *I did it not, but sin that dwelleth in me; so to a word, I spake it not, but sin and corruption that dwelleth in me, gave out such language.*

Secondly, *I would not beleive that God had hearkened to me, though he had answered me,* may refer to the manner of his prayer or invocation, as not coming up to the height and measure of the duty, as not fulfilling that Law of prayer which the Lord requireth; and so because his prayers were imperfect and weak, therefore he would not beleive that ever God had taken notice of him, or hearkned to his voice: As if he had said, *You bid me make my supplication; if I do, yet I will not beleive that God takes notice of my prayers.* Why? because mine are but cold and unbeleiving prayers, weak and distracted prayers, the prayers of a distemper'd heart, the prayers of a confused spirit, such I confess mine are; therefore I cannot beleive God will hearken to my voice.

But rather in the last place, take the sense thus, that Job in these words breaths out the humility of his spirit; as if he had said, *I am so far from standing upon my terms with God (as was shewed before) as if I had hopes to carry it with him by contending, that though I come in the humblest manner to invoke and call upon his Name, and I find him so gracious and merciful to me as that he doth answer me in my requests, and grant the thing I desire, yet I will not believe that he hath hearkned to my voice, that is, that he hath done this for any worthiness in me, in my services or prayers, I will not believe that the answer I receive from heaven is obtained by any value which my person hath with God.*

Such is the coldness and deadness, the languishment and unbelief of my heart in prayer, such are my prayers, that the truth is, I cannot beleive I am heard, when I am heard, I cannot think my petition granted, when I see it is granted. Thus it sets forth the exceeding humility and lowliness of his spirit, he would give all the glory unto God in granting his petitions, and take nothing at all to himself in making those petitions. *I would not beleive that he hath hearkned to my voyce.*

What voice was it then that he believ'd God hearkn'd unto? He hearkn'd to the voice of his Mediatour, to the voice of Christ: He hearken'd to the voice of his own free grace: He hearkn'd to the sounding of his own bowels: He hearken'd to the motions and intercessions of his spirit in me; to the motions and intercessions of his Son for me. It is not my voyce that hath got the answer; he

Pleriq; Latini ad eas condiciones referunt quas oratio efficiat requirit, quarum defectus non exaudimur atq; ea ratione sibi timere. Jobum.

Videtur hoc esse animi mirabiliter de ipse, atq; sibi suæq; orationi diffidentis, fidentis vero de sola divina bonitate. Pined.

Non ex diffidentia hoc dicit, sed ex timore, Dei reverentis judicium. Drus.

he alone that hath granted it of his good pleasure in Christ.

I would not beleive that he had hearkned to my voice.

1228
Credere stabile
esse.

1227
Gracie inwi-
tetur,

* Auscultare,
inclinacionem
animi denotat

ad alterius di-
cta. Cujus op-

positum est, au-
res claudere et
obturare ad ali-

cujus sermonem.
Hinc pro verbi-
um. Surdo

narras fabu-
lam. Hæc verba
exactam demissi-

animi significa-
tione continen-
t.

Tunc cum ari-
terit gratia, ti-
me, cum abierit,

tunc Bernard
Providentia

Dei saepe nobis
benevola est,

cum nulla bene-
volentia exter-
na præbet argu-
mentum, imo ali-
quando quem
exaudit non hinc
conterit malo-
rum.

The word signifies both beleiving and establisshing, or to beleive and establissh; and the reason of it is, because faith settles the heart, *Faith is the establisshment of the soul.* An unbeliever hath no bottom, he is built without a foundation, his spirit is unfixed.

And that act of beleiving [*I would not beleive*] is the generall act of faith, namely, a firm assent to the truth of what another speaketh. An assent to the truth of it two wayes. To the truth of it: First, Historically, that such a thing was spoken or done; And then Logically, that the thing is true which is spoken. When he saith, *I would not beleive that God hath done this*, his meaning is, *I would not assent to it, as done for my sake, or for my voice; not that he would not beleive the thing was done at all.* He assented to the word and answer of God, when he did receive it; but in that restriction, he would not beleive it, namely in reference to himself, that he hath hearkned to his voice.

To hearken is more then to hear; * it notes the inclination of the mind, rather then the attention of the ear. As to stop the ear notes the shutting of the heart against obedience, rather then of the ear against audience. To tell a tale to a deaf man, is to speak to one that hears, but will not grant.

From all it appears,

First, That, *Job* speaks very highly of the goodness of God, namely, that God answers prayer, though he hath not respect to the voice of him that prayeth, *though he had answered me, yet would I not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice.*

Secondly, That, he speaks exceeding humbly and submissively of himself, *my voice*; what am I, a poor creature, that I should think I had carried the matter with God?

Thirdly, That, he speaks very wisely and understandingly concerning the nature and efficacy of prayer, and the means procuring answers of prayer. When man prayes God answers; but he doth not answer because man prayes.

Fourthly, That, he speaks very highly and gloriously of the providence of God, though providence act darkly towards man. We pray, God answers, and doth us good, yet things may go quite contrary in appearance, *If I had called, and he had answered me, yet would I not beleive that he had hearkned unto my voice,*

voice; why? *He breaketh me with a tempest. God was breaking him, and bearing him at the same time.* God may be doing us good, when the signs he gives speaks evil; he hears and answers us praying to him, when we think we hear him thundering terribly against us.

Hence, first, We learn, That

Prayer is a calling upon God.

Then the heart should be very attentive upon God in prayer. How can we expect God should hear us, when we do not hear our selves! in prayer we call upon God, therefore we should call upon our selves to consider how and what we pray.

Secondly, Note. *Prayer granted is prayer answered.*

If I had called and he had answered me. The Lord from heaven speaks to us in every act of his providence; his speaking to us is in doing for us. The works of God are answers to man. God doth not answer audibly or sensibly; there is a voice in his dispensations. As men (*Prov. 6. 13.*) So the Lord speaks to us with his feet, and answers our prayers with his fingers, that is, his works and wayes are demonstrations of his will in answer to our prayers.

Thirdly, In that *Job* tells us, *He would not beleive, &c.* we are taught.

That faith is a necessary ingredient in prayer.

This negation of his faith in prayer, implies the need of faith in prayer. When I pray I should beleive, but as my case stands I cannot beleive, clouds and darkness are upon me. Faith is the strength of prayer, *Whatsoever ye ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive* Mat. 21. 22. Prayer without faith, it is like a Gun discharge d without a bullet, which makes a noise, but doth no execution; we may put out a voice in speaking, but except we put out faith in speaking, we do but speak, we do not pray. As the word of God coming upon us doth us no good, prevails not upon our hearts, unless it be mixed with faith (*Heb. 4. 2.*) *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* So the word that goes out from us, the word of prayer, prevailth not at all with God, obtaineth nothing from him unless it be mixed with faith; all the promises are made to believers, *All things are possible to them that beleive* (*Mar. 9. 23.*) *Ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed* (*Jam. 1. 6.*) To ask in faith, is to ask, resting upon the power of God, whereby he is able, upon his truth,

whereby he is faithfull, and upon his goodness in Christ, whereby he is ready to make good his promises. He that asks thus doth not waver. Few are without doubting, but all sound believers are without wavering. The Greek word signifies to question, or dispute a thing, a degree beyond doubting; as when a man is at no certainty with himself, being sometime of one mind, sometime of another. The judgement being so carried, that the man is at variance with his own brest, or is between two wayes, not knowing which to take. We translate the word (in the 4th of the Romans, vers. 20.) by staggering. *Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.* The similitude which the Apostle James uses, illustrates this sense, *he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea*, which by tempestuous winds is sometimes carried up to heaven, and anon down to the deep. A man who is tossed with such waves of unbelief, staggers like a drunken man, in his practice and profession; he is now on this side, to morrow on that; he doth not only stagger or halt in his way, but he staggers or halts between two wayes, and is therefore called (vers. 8.) *A double minded man*; the prayers of such a man are faithless prayers, and therefore fruitless prayers, *Let not that man think he shall receive any thing* (unless a rebuke, and a deniall) *of the Lord* (verse 7.) There are no promises made to such, and therefore no mercies conveyed to such. Beleiving prayer is gaining prayer; yet they who beleive least, presume most. Hence the Apostles check, *Let not that man think*; as if he had said, I know such will flatter themselves into a perswasion of great matters; they will have high thoughts, but they shall receive nothing.

Observe, Fourthly, *That how strongly soever a godly man acts faith, for the answer of his prayers, yet he hath no faith that his prayer deserves an answer.*

I would not beleive that he had hearkned to [my] voice. Christ calleth the Spouse to prayer (Cant. 2. 14.) *Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance comely.* Christ loves prayer. *The prayers of the Saints upon earth are musick in heaven.* That invitation to the Spouse, *Let me hear thy voice*, seems to be an allusion to those, who loving musick, call upon a friend who hath a good voice, or exquisite skill to play upon an instrument, *Come, sing us a song, play us a lesson, let us have a fit of mirth.* Thus I say, Christ speaks to the Church, *Come, let me hear thy voice, 'tis sweet, I know thou hast a sweet one.* But the

the Saints judge their own voices harsh and unharmonically, they are apt to think their prayers jarrings and discords, at the best but a rude noise, not a composed air in the ear of God. Faith makes our prayers melodious, because it carries us out of our selves. A beleiver lives not in the sound of his own prayers, but of Christs intercession. What are we that we should expect any acceptance upon our own account? or say, this *We* have gained, this *We* have obtained, thus God hath heard *us*, or thus we have wrestled it out with God? as when we have performed all our duties, we must say, *We are unprofitable servants*; so when we have obtained all our sutes, we must say, *We are unprofitable petitioners*; I will not beleive that God hath hearkned unto my voice. What's mans voice, that God should hear it?

Observe, Fifthly, *That a godly man sometimes cannot beleive his prayer is heard, when it is heard.*

Though he calls and God answers, yet (like *Job*) he beleives not that God hath hearkn'd to his voice; he cannot think his prayer is heard, though one should come and tell him it is heard. When the Jews returned from *Babylon*, the mercy was so Great, that they could not beleive they had it, when they had it; *When thou didst turn our captivity, we were as them that dream* (Psal. 126. 2.) The deliverance was incredible, they could not think they were delivered. Their return to *Jerusalem* was suspected for a dream of it in *Babylon*. The Church prayed without ceasing for *Peter*, when he was in prison (Act. 12. 5.) yet when the Lord brought him out of prison, & he was knocking at the door of the house where they were assembled, while they were knocking at the door of heaven for his deliverance, yet they would not beleive the report of the damsell, who said he stood before the gate; they tell her she is mad, and when she affirm'd it with sobriety, as well as vehemency, then, they have another help for their unbelief, *It was not Peter but his Angel*. Thus it is to this day with the Saints, in their great personal sutes and petitions, both about spiritual things and temporal, they are so overcome, astonished and amazed at the goodness of God, that though they see the thing done, yet they can hardly beleive it is done. As if a Prince should send a message to a poor man by some great Lord, and tell him he hath bestowed honour and favour upon him, the poor man is ready to say, I cannot beleive it: the blessing is too big for him to digest, and let down into his narrow heart; no, saith he, sure it is not so. Though the people of God ever preserve a

*Forſan hoc dic-
cit, quia ſepe
præ nimia læ-
titiâ non credi-
mus verum eſſe
quod maxime
verum eſſe op-
tamus. Druf.*

high respect and esteem of the works of God towards them, yet their faith is often below his workings, and they cannot receive or take in mercy so fast as it cometh; faith widens the vessel of the soul to receive much, but God can pour in faster then faith can widen the soul to receive.

Sixthly, Observe, *Faith hath its decays.*

Faith doth not keep up alwayes at the same height, in the same plight and degree: There is a faith which beleives that God doth answer before he answers, and there is a faith that cannot beleive God will answer, when he hath answered. Faith in strength prevents the answer of God. As God in answering sometimes prevents our askings (Isa. 65. 24.) *Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear:* So faith saith, *Before the Lord giveth I know I have it, before the Lord doth this thing, I see it is done.* Faith in its strength realizes the mercies of God before they have a being, and is an evidence to us of what we see not. When mercies are but in their principles, in their conception and birth, or at most, when they are but in their cradle and swadling-clouts, faith speaks as gloriously of them, as if they were fully acted and grown up before the eye. Strong faith in God (like God himself) quickens the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were. Weak faith deadens the quick, and calleth those things which are, as if they were not. The *Israelites* were no sooner over the red sea, but they beleived themselves in the land of *Canaan* (Exod. 15. 13, 14, 15.) and in their Song tell the story of the submission and fears of the uncircumcised Nations round about, which yet their after unbeleif kept off forty years.

There is a further understanding of the words, which I shall clear in connexion with that which followeth.

I would not beleive that he had hearkned to my voice; For he breaketh me with a tempest; as if the reason why he doubted his [voice] was not heard, lay in this, because of those continual breakings which were upon him, *I would not beleive that he had hearkened to my voice, for he breaketh me with a tempest, & multiplieth my wounds without a cause:* As if *Job* had said, the dealings of God are such towards me, that I know not how to make it out that I am heard: For though the Lord in some things carries it so graciously toward me, that I have great assurance I am heard, yet many things appear, reporting that I am not heard. Afflictions continued

are

*Etiam si Deus
me precantem
exaudierit, mi-
nime credo cum
malorum nimbo
me obruat.*

are no evidence that prayer is not heard, yet usually it is very inevident to an afflicted person, that his prayer is heard.

I shall now examine the 16, and 17. verse, as holding a reason why *Jobs* faith was thus weakned.

Vers. 17. *For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.*

Jobs sorrows put him to his rhetorick skill, *He breaketh me with a tempest.* An expression raising his afflictions to the height, yet, not beyond the reality of them, *He breaketh me with a tempest.*

The word we translate [*break*] signifies an utter contulion, or the totall ruining of a thing or person, the dashing of either to pieces. The word is used reciprocally of Christ and the devil, in that great and first promise of Christ, the seed of the woman. (*Gen. 3. 16.*) *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* Christ having infinite power, utterly destroyed the Serpents power; he spoyle'd and ruin'd him for ever: the Apostle phrases it so (*Coloss. 2. 15.*) *He spoyle'd principalities and powers;* he took away the prey or booty of souls, which they had got, and led them disarm'd like prisoners of war. And the devil did what he could to ruine and spoyle Christ, to break Christ to pieces. Thus Christ and Satan strove and contended one with another. And the word (*Shuph*) hath an elegant nearness in sound to our English. We call that noise which is made by the ruder motion of the feet, *shuffling*, and when men contend much, we hear the *shuffling* of their feet. *Job* was striving and *shuffling* with God in prayer, and God was striving and *shuffling* with *Job* in storms and tempests.

He breaketh me with a tempest.

The word signifies not only storms and tempests, but likewise *A little hair or twined threed.* So the Chaldee Paraphrast translates it here, *He disputes or contends with me to a hair, or to a threed;* making the sense out thus, *I will not beleive that God hath answered me; why? He standeth with me upon the smallest matters; he disputes with me to a hair, and debates every thing to a threed.* As Abraham said to the King of Sodom, (*Gen. 14. 23.*) *I will not take any thing that is thine from a threed even to a shoe-latchet;* that is, I will not make the smallest gain by thee: So to dispute to a hair, or to a threed, notes contending upon or about the smallest differences.

Contudit, contrivit, obminuit.

Chaldeus legit, usq; ad filum lineum, vel ad filum pilorum subtiliter disputat mecum.
 filum significat.

But

But generally the word is rendred a *Tempest*; and thus God is often described contending with man, (Nah. 1.3.) *His way is in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet*; that is, he sends storms and whirlwinds, by these afflicts the children of men; and as an army of horsemen, raises clouds of dust from the earth with their feet: so the Lord raises the dust of clouds with his, *Behold a whirlwind, or a tempest of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked*, Jer. 23. 19.

To break with a tempest, or with a whirlwind, implies two things.

1. A sudden and an unexpected affliction. Tempests are never welcomet, and but seldome looked for: When the sea is so calm and smooth that you may throw a die upon it a storm ariseth in a moment, and the vessel indanger of a wreck.

2. It noteth the fierceness and violence of an affliction. Tempests are the most violent motions, they come with power. A tempest is irresistable, who can stand before it? Who can contend with storms and windes? When the Lord made totall conquests of his enemies, he contended (in the letter) by storms and tempests. As in the 10th of *Joshua*, and in the first of *Samuel* (Chap. 7. 10.) *When the Philistines drew near to battel against Israel, the Lord thundered with a great thunder that day upon the Philistines and discomfited them*. The story is famous of a legion of Christian souldiers, called the *thundering legion*, because by prayer they obtained a refreshing rain for the army in which they were commanded, and a terrible storm of thunder and lightning, &c. upon the enemy. The word is used figuratively in war, when besiegers coming to a Town or Fort are resolved to carry it presently what ever it cost them, they are said to *storm the place* or to *get it by storm*. The Prophet alludes to this (Isa. 25. 4.) *When the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall*; that is, when their rage shall be at the highest, most violent and impetuous, then the Lord will be a *refuge from the storm*. The same God who saves many from the storms of man, did himself storm *Job*.

He breaketh me with a tempest.

Job was storm'd, yet supposes his prayer was answered. Hence observe,

Prayers may be heard and answered, when greatest afflictions are upon us.

Do

Do not think your prayers are lost, because your afflictions are not removed, or that God doth not hear you, because he doth not presently relieve you. God forbears when he doth not deny. He answers to our profit, when he answereth not to our feeling. He answereth to our spiritual interest, when not to our corporall. The sick man calleth to the Physitian to take away the bitter, loathsome potion; and the wounded man calleth to the Chyrurgion to take away those corroding plaisters, and to forbear those torturing operations. But the one gives him his portion, and the other lances his sores, and layes corrosives to his flesh; both these, while they vex the patient, answer him: for what's the reason, why the patient would have his bitterpotion taken away? it is not because he would be better? and why would he have those painfull operations forborn? is it not because he would have ease: Now, for those very reasons the Masters of those professions keep him to both; neither could they give him his desire, but by doing contrary to his will. Thus also the Lord is healing us, when we think he is only wounding us, and fulfilling our desires, while we cry out he is crossing them.

Quidam non negantur, sed ut congruo tempore dentur, differuntur. Aug.

Ex auditu sapientie ad profectum, licet non ad votum. Aquin. in loc.

Servitur in vulnus, ut homo sanetur. Aug.

Secondly, Observe, *Even while we are praying, the Lord may be thundering, he may be breaking us when we are beseeching him.*

We must learn to keep our duty, whatsoever the dealings of God be; whether it be foul weather or fair, pray still; whether it be storm or calm, go on in prayer still. Pray still though God break still. It is our duty to pray, and it is Gods priviledge to break.

Thirdly, Observe from the loftiness of the language.

That the Lord layes very sore afflictions upon those that are very dear to him.

Job expresseth his afflictions by *breaking with a tempest. Stroaks from the clouds are most terrible.* The same afflictions and scourges which he layes upon his enemies, he layes (in the matter, yea, and often in degree) upon his best friends. What can the Lord do to his greatest enemies, but break them with a tempest? he doth not only chasten with a rod, but sometimes scatter with a storm; he hath not only a sword, but a thunder-bolt for his servants; he hath terrible stroaks and blows for them who lie in his arms, and live in his embraces. Therefore we cannot distinguish men by the matter, no nor by the measure of their afflictions; that which is a judgement to one, is but a chastening to another, with the same weapon he wounds a friend and destroyes an enemy.

Fourth-

Fourthly, Observe, That afflictions continued cause us to suspect that our prayers are not answered.

*Licet Deus ve-
re exaudiat,
tamen homo in
miseriis consti-
tutus se exau-
divi non credit.
Aquin.*

Why doth Job think that God hearkned not to him? I would not beleive (saith he) that God had hearkned unto my voice; why? because still he continues to break me. Faith is put hard to it at such a time; and this is the thing which stumbled Job, he could not tell how to make it out, that God had heard his prayer for him, because he heard so great a noise of tempests and storms against him. It is very difficult for faith to see mercy thorow clouds of trouble. It is a hard thing for faith to look upon the pleased face of God thorow a lowring tempest, or to beleive the calmness of Gods heart to us in troublesome dispensations. Therefore he speaks here as if his faith were even master'd. The providences of God are often too hard for man. And with this temptation Satan helps on unbelief. If he come to a soul in affliction, which keepeth close to his interests in Christ; Yea (saith he) you may do so though afflictions were upon you, but yours are more then afflictions, yours are tempests and storms: God dealeth with you as with an enemy, yours are no ordinary matters, yours are like the portion he gives to those he hates; I would not weaken your faith, because of a chastening rod, but you are beaten with scorpions, and will you still beleive? Can God love you and deal thus with you? Thus the serpent whispers in those louder tempests of affliction.

Fifthly, Observe, That

Afflictions continued cause us to suspect that our prayers shall not be answered.

And so I find some rendering the former verse in connexion with this, If I have called, and he hath answered me, yet will I not beleive that he will hearken to my voice. As if he had said, I know God hath heard me heretofore, but I fear he will hear me no more; because I find his hand so heavy upon me. Surely then he hath forgotten to be gracious, and hath shut up his tender mercies. Former experiences can hardly keep faith whole, while we are under present breakings.

Lastly, If we take the words, as importing a calling to God for answer in a way of provocation (as was shewed before) then the sense is; If I had an ambition to contend with God, and he had answered me, by condescending to that course, yet I could not beleive he had hearkned to my voice, that is, I could not beleive that he had yielded the cause to me; why? because he goes on still to break

me

me with tempests; he follows me with trouble still; he shews he hath done me no wrong, in my former afflictions, by his going on to afflict me still, he is so far from acknowledging the least injustice, in what is past of my sufferings, that I suffer more, *He breaks me with a tempest, and*

Multiplies my wounds without cause.

But is not this injustice to multiply wounds without cause? Is not this a charge of blasphemy upon God? May we not think that now Satan had his wish, and that Job cursed God indeed? Dicitur Gravis.

The Hebrew word which we translate, *without cause*, hath been opened, Chap. 1. 9. and Chap. 2. 3. and it hath occurred elsewhere. Here, *He multiplies my wounds without cause*, is not a charge of injustice upon God, Job's heart was far from the least thought of that, as you may see in all the dispute: But it is an acknowledgment of the sovereignty and power of God, *Though he hath wounded me already, yet he may wound me still, without giving me a reason; or though I have given him no cause.* What? Do ye think God would yield to me, if I should contend with him? *He multiplieth, or, He multiplieth my wounds without cause*, that is, without giving me any account hitherto; and do you think that now I shall have liberty to call him to an account; or that he will give me one? *He wounds without cause*, is* without cause manifested. God hath not told me the reason of his chastenings. And I do not perceive the reason. I know not why he contendeth with me. And so he expounds what he spake at the 12th verse, *Loe, he passeth by me, and I see him not.* There are mysteries in providence. Mans eye is not clear enough to see all that God doth before his eyes. *Job is his own Expositour.* This latter expression gives us a comment upon the former. And it is observable, that both in this book, and in the whole body of the Scripture, easier texts may be found to interpret the harder, and clear ones to enlighten those which are darker and more obscure. *The Word of God is not only a light and a rule to us, but to itself.*

Or, *He multiplieth my wounds without cause*] is as if Job had said, I know the Lord deals not with me as with a guilty person, nor doth he judge me as a malefactor; mine is a probation, not a punishment; God doth only try me, to see what is in my heart, and how I can stand in an evil day. *He multiplieth my wounds without cause*; that is, without the cause which you have so often

Vulnere sine causa sunt mala et flagella, quæ non ab aliquo mittuntur peccatum.

* *Sine causa manifesta, et ab homine afflictio preceptibili.* Aquin.

His verbis evidenter exponit, quæ supra occulto dixerit; si venerit ad me, non video. Hoc enim ubiq; fere in dictis Jobi observandum, quod obscure dicta per aliquam consequentiam exponantur. Aquin.

Hæc d Job dicta sunt, quod intelligat se non tam flagellari quam probari.

*Animus in De-
um præclare
affectus, sed
tamen affectus
doloribus.*

objected against me, namely that I am an hypocrite and wicked. I know God looks upon me as a child, or a friend, not as an enemy. Therefore I have no cause to multiply words with God, though God go on to multiply my wounds without cause.

To multiply wounds] notes numerous and manifold afflictions; many in number, and many in kind. Job's were deep, deadly wounds, and he had many of them, was all over wound, body and soul were wounds, he was smitten within and without; as to multiply to pardon, is to pardon abundantly (Isa. 55. 7.) So to multiply wounds, or to multiply to wound, is to wound abundantly.

Here a Question would be resolved, how the justice of God may be acquitted, in laying on and multiplying afflictions without cause.

I shall refer the Reader for further light about this point to the third verse of the second Chapter, where those words are opened; *Thou movest me against him, to destroy him without cause;* yet take here three considerations more, by way of answer to the doubt.

First, Whatsoever the Lord wounds and takes from any man, he wounds and takes his own. *He is Lord over all.* Our health and strength are his, our riches are his; *The world is his, and the fulness of it* (Psal. 50.) *If he be hungry he needs not tell us;* he can go to his own store. It is no wrong to dispose what is our own, wheresoever we find it. That rule is as true in revocations, as distributions: *Friend, I do thee no wrong* (Mat. 20. 15.) *Is it not lawfull for me to do what I will with mine own?* though there were no sin in man, yet there were no injustice in God, because he takes nothing from us, but what he gave us, and hath full power to recall and take away.

Secondly, Suppose man could say, [that, what he had were his own, that, his riches were his own, that, health and strength of body were his own, yet God may take them away, and do no wrong. It is so among men, *Kings and States* call out their Subjects to war, and in that war their wounds are multiplied without any cause given by them: they gave no occasion why they should be appointed to such hazards of life and limb, to such hardships of hunger and cold; yet there is no injustice in this. When God casts man into trouble, he calls him out to his service, he hath a war, some noble enterprize and design to send him upon. To
you

you it is given to suffer for his sake (saith the Apostle, Phil. 1. 29.) he puts it among the speciall priviledges, which some Saints are graced with, not only above the world, but above many of the Saints, *To whom it is given* (and that's a royal gift) *only to believe.* Now, if in prosecuting this suffering task, whether for Christ, or from Christ, a beleiver layes out his estate, credit liberty, or life, he is so far from being wronged, that he is honoured. Thousands are slain on publick imployments, who have given no cause to be so slain. If according to the line of men, this be no injustice, much less is it injustice in God, who is without line, himself being the only line and rule to himself, and to all besides himself.

Thirdly, I may answer it thus, though the Lord *multiply wounds without cause*; yet he doth it without wrong to the wounded, because he wounds with an intent to heal, and takes away with a purpose to give more; as in the present case God, made *Job* an amends for all the wounds, whether of his body or goods, good name or spirit. Now, though it be a truth in respect of man, that we may not break anothers head, and say, we will give him a plaister, or to take away from a man his possession, and say we will give it him again, yet God may. Man must not be so bold with man, because he hath no right to take away and wound, nor is he sure that he can restore and heal; but it is no boldness, but a due right in God to do thus, for he as Lord hath power to take away, and ability to restore. And he restores sometimes in temporalls, as to *Job*, but alwayes to his people in spirituals and eternals. Hence the Apostle argueth (2 Cor. 4. 17.) *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us an eternal weight of glory.* Afflictions work glory for us, not in a way of meriting glory, but in a tendency to the receiving of glory, and in preparations for it. *There is no wrong in those losses by which we are made gainers: those losses being sent that we may gain, and the sender of the loss being able effectually to make us gainers.*

He multiplyeth my wounds without cause.

Hence observe, First,

Afflictions are no argument that God doth not love us.

As the Lord hath a multitude of mercies in his heart, so a multitude of afflictions in his hand; and a multitude of afflictions may consist with a multitude of mercies. At the same time when we

are visibly encompassed about, and besieged with an army of sorrows and opposers, an army of invisible comforts, and protectours may be encamping round about us : As *Elisha* assured his servant, 2 *King.* 6. 17.

Secondly, (Which I shall ~~not~~ only name, because I have met it heretofore.)

The Lord is not accountable to any creature for his actions.

He multiplyeth my wounds without cause, or He multiplyeth my wounds without shewing cause. God is the only Judge, who may give sentence without hearing parties, or shewing cause. It is unrighteous in an earthly Judge to do so ; he must not judge a man to any suffering, and not shew reason of his judgement: But the first cause needs not shew second causes. God hath the reason of all things in himself, and therefore we cannot call him to give his reason. Where the will of the Agent may lawfully be all the reason of his actions, there is no reason he should give any account of his actions, but what himself wills.

The next verse is of the same tenour in sense with the former, the difference is only in expression.

Vers. 18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.*

Non dedit mihi
retrahere spiri-
tum.

He not only breaks me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds, but *He will not suffer me to take my breath.* This implies the unintermittedness of afflictions; as if he had said, *I have not only many afflictions, and great afflictions, but continuall afflictions.* The Hebrew is, *He will not give me to draw back my breath, or suffer my breath to return :* The words are of the same importance with those of the 7th Chapter, ver. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me ? Nor let me alone till I swallow down my spittle ?* That is, wilt thou not give me so much respite as to swallow down my spittle ? Here (which is more) he affirms, *He will not give me so much as a breathing time.*

Quidam ad
morbum refe-
runt. quasi Job
Asthma labo-
rasset. Beda.

Some interpret this of a bodily distemper or disease : that God had brought a sickness upon him, which did even stop his breath, as if *Job* had been troubled with hardness of breathing, with the *Tissick* (as Physicians call it) or a stopping in the lungs. But we may rather take it figuratively, my sorrows put me out of breath, the Lord doth not only afflict me without giving me any account, but I have uncessant afflictions, which cannot be counted. *No man*

can tell how often he doth or suffers that which he alwayes doth or suffers. I am so far from seeing a period of my troubles, that I have not so much as any pause or stop. He speaks in that high strain of rhetorick, called *hyperbole*, for in strictness of the letter, not to suffer a man to take his breath, is to kill and quite destroy him: but when he saith, God will not suffer me to breathe, it noteth the continuation of his sorrows, not the expiration of his dayes.

Again not to suffer a man to take his breath, before he hath done such a thing, is a * *Proverb*, for speedy doing. Like that used by some of the Ancients, to do a thing *without one spit*, that is, in as little time as a man may spit. When the *Italians* would express acting without delay, they say, *Go about this business, and do not fetch a breath till you are here again, go and come with a breath*. That direction given by *Elisha* to his servant *Gebezi*, when he sent him to restore the *Sbunammites* son (2 Kings 4. 29.) *Take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way, if thou meet any man, salute him not, and if any salute thee, answer him not again, &c.* And that of Christ to his Disciples, when he gave them their Commission to preach the Gospel (Luk. 10. 4.) *Salute no man by the way*, are of the same intendment. Christ did not mean that his Disciples should be uncivil (nor *Elisha* his) he did not forbid them to use common courtesies to men, when they went to call men to speciall grace. No, but his meaning is, go speedily about the work, do not stand complementing and talking with, *How do you, and how do you?* by the way: do not entertain the time, or trifle it away with Ceremonies, having an imployment of such infinite concernment put into your hands. So he seems to allude to, and reprove that ill custome of idle servants, who when they are sent forth upon business will yet stand and talk with every one they meet. Now, as not to suffer a man to talk a word while he is upon a service, imports suddain dispatch: So when *Job* saith, *He will not suffer me to take my breath* in these my sufferings, his meaning is, mine are no lazy, dull sufferings, I am forced to be active at them, I cannot stand breathing and cooling my self, I have no leisure, no vacation at all from this passive service; *He will not suffer me to take my breath*.

But (or, for) he filleth me with bitterness, or with biternesses.

I have opened this word before, c. 3. 10. As in Scripture, sweetness implies all comfort: so bitterness all trouble and sorrow. When
God

* Fortasse pro-
verbium erat,
ad significan-
dum facere ali-
quid indifinen-
ter et absq;
ulls vel mini-
mæ moræ aut
intermissione.
Una salvia.
Hieron. in ep
ἀνευσι, i.e. uno
spiritu aliquid
facere est dili-
genter facere.
Theoph. in
Charact,
Clivum istem
uno si potes,
spiritu exupe-
rare Sen.
b Va presto, et
non fietare, q.d.
uno halitu e-
gressum et re-
gressum perfice.

*Sicut dulcedo
omnia jucunda
et amica natu-
ra significat,
sic nomine a-
maritudinis,
præsertim in
numero multi-
tudinis, gravis-
simæ quæq; af-
flictiones intel-
liguntur. Bold.
Videtur non
dulcuerunt.
Hos. 9. 4.*

God complains about the services of his people (*Fer. 6. 20. Hos. 9.*) he saith, *Your Sacrifices are not sweet to me*; so the Originall; that is, your Sacrifices are not acceptable to me, or pleasing to me. Sweet things are pleasing things, bitter things are unpleasing. Afflictions are unpleasant to flesh and blood (*Heb. 12. 11.*) *No affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous.*

Bitterness is put for the extreamest affliction, and in the plurall (as here) for all afflictions; *Surely the bitterness of death is past*, saith *Agag* (*1 Sam. 15. 32.*) that is, I have escaped bitter death at this time; the souldier spared me in the heat of the battell, surely then a Prophet will not slay me in cold blood. *To be filled with bitterness* notes abundance of afflictions. As to be filled with the Spirit, to be filled with the fulness of Christ, &c. note the plentiful receiving of the Spirit, and of the grace of Christ. To taste of a bitter cup, to sip a little of it, is unpleasant, but to drink large draughts, to be fild with bitterness, who can abide? When Christ was come to *Golgotha*, They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall; but (though he drank up that cup of his fathers wrath to the very bottom, though he drank up all the gall and wormwood of sin, for the salvation of men, yet) when he had tasted thereof, *He would not drink* (*Mat. 27. 34.*) If it be grievous to taste but a little of a bitter cup, then judge how greivous *Job's* sufferings were, who was filled with bitterness; he had his belly full of trouble, his belly full of Gall and Wormwood, his stomach could hold no more, bitterness was both his meat and drink.

Note, First, *Afflictions may come uncessantly.*

Not so much as a breathing time between; then while thou art assaulted prepare for fresh assaults.

Observe, Secondly, *The Lord sometimes mixes a very bitter cup for his own people.*

Yea, they have not only a bitter cup, but bitterness is their cup; and they have not only a taste of it, but are filled with it. The Psalmist shews us a bitter cup, which is the proper portion of wicked men; *There is a cup in the hand of the Lord, and it is full of mixture, the wine is red, and the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them* (*Ps. 75. 8.*) The Lord hath a cup of red wine, that is, a cup filled with wrath, fury and indignation. Wicked men (how much soever their stomachs loath it, and turn against it) shall drink it up to the bottom, or he will

pou

pour it down their throats, whether they will or no. *They shall be filled with bitterness* after all their sweet morsels and pleasant draughts. The Saints are filled with bitterness from God, but not with the wrath of God; many sorrows may be mingled in their cup, but everlasting love is ever mingled in it. *Saints never drink pure wrath, as wicked men never taste pure love.*

To conclude we may observe here a *Climax*, or gradation of four steps.

First (*Vers. 14.*) *Job* acknowledged that he was unable to answer the Lord.

And secondly, He professeth that if he could, he would not, no, he would humble himself (*vers. 15.*)

Thirdly, If in mercy God should answer his petition, yet he would not be confident at all (in regard of himself) that God had heard him, or hearkened unto his voice.

Lastly, He acknowledged that God might go on to afflict him still; for some read this text in the future tense, *He will multiply my wounds, and afflict me without cause; He will fill me with bitterness.* A godly man reckons up his afflictions as well as his comforts to the praise and honour of God. And the more God afflicts him, the more he abases himself, though he doth not think the worse of himself, because God doth afflict him.

JOB.

J O B, Chap. 9. Vers. 19, 20, 21.

If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong; and if of judgement, who shall set me a time to plead?

If I justify my self, mine own mouth shall condemn me; If I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soul, I would despise my life.

JO B goeth on to lay himself yet lower before God: and having in the three former verses proved, that weak man is not able to contend with the Almighty; he giveth an additional proof in this 19th verse, from the considerations of a two-fold adjunct in God. First, his *strength*. And secondly, his *justice*. From both he concludeth, according to the former argument given upon the whole matter in the 10th verse, seeing God is so strong and just, *Surely, if I justify my self my own mouth shall condemn me; and if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.*

If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong.

There are two wayes, whereby a man makes his part good against another man.

First, By the strength of his arm, and dint of his sword.

Secondly, By the equity of his cause, and the goodness of his conscience. *Job* declareth his inability to deal with God in either, *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong, &c.*

M. Broughton translates thus, *As for force he is valiant; if I think to carry it by force with God, he is a God of valour, or as Moses in his Song (Exod. 15. 3.) describeth him, The Lord is a man of war, I cannot deal with him upon that point.*

In originali in-
differens est,
nam tantum ha-
betur, si ad po-
tentiam; ut sus-
pleri possi, ve-
nero, aut re-
sperero, vel
aliquid simile.

The Original speaks only thus much, *If of strength, he strong; we supply the word [speak] if men talk of strength, or boast of strength, or shew forth their strength (we may supply it with any of those words) Lo, he is strong.* as it is usual with us when we would set a man up, in the perfection of any quality, we say, *What do you speak of knowledge, why, There's a learned man! What do ye speak of riches, why, there's a rich man! &c.* Such an emphasis is carried in this expression, *If I speak of strength, why, here's one that is strong indeed!*

There

There are five words in the Hebrew which signifie strength. The first notes strength in general : The second, strength to endure labour : The third, efficacy : The fourth, vigour : the fifth, which is that of the text, superiority of strength, or prevailing strength. It is one thing to be strong, and another thing to prevail. The Lord is not only strong, but strongest ; he hath a strength above all strength, he is strong overcomingly, strong prevailingly. Christ in the Gospel speaks of a strong man (he means the devil) that kept the house ; but he was not strong prevailingly, for there came a stronger then he, that spoyle'd him, and took away all his armour from him, wherein he trusted (Luk. 11. 22.) but when the holy Ghost saith, That the Lord is strong, the meaning is, that he is stronger then all : and so generally the positive is expounded by the superlative, *If we speak of strength, he is strong*, that is, he is most strong. Thus we find the word used, 2 Sam. 22. 18. *He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me, for they were too strong for me* : they were prevailingly strong for me, and therefore unless I had found a supply of help, unless some auxillaries had come from heaven to take my part, they had been too hard for me, I had been overmatcht, they were prevailingly strong, or too strong for me. We have the word in the same sense (Gen. 25. 23.) in that resolution which the unerring Oracle of heaven gave Rebekah enquiring about the children striving in her womb, the Lord answereth thus, *Two Nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people* ; and then addeth, *The one people shall be stronger then the other people* ; it is this word, the one people shall be prevailingly strong, and shall overcome the other ; both people shall be strong, mighty and potent, but there is one of them shall have the rule, and shall conquer and subdue the other. *If I speak of strength, he is strong*. The sum is, *If the Question be about strength and power, then the Lord carries the day and the honour, he is most powerfull, he is strong above all*. Hence observe, That

God is of infinite and insuperable strength.

He hath strength : many have malice and wickedness, boldness and presumption enough to oppose, but none have power enough to overcome him. He hath force which none can subdue ; and he hath authority which none ought to resist. These two must concur wheresoever there is full determining power. A man may have authority or right to do a thing, and yet have no strength

צָחַק

Prevalens,
vincens, in-
victo quodam
et obstinato
animo prae-
dictus, dici
solet de eo
qui viribus su-
perior est.

כֹּחַ Vis gene-
raliter, אֲמָץ

connotat pro-
portionem ad
efficientiam, vel
contentionem
virium, אֲמָץ
Est durabilitas
in agentis et
actione.

נְבוֹנָה

Efficaciam

וִיגוֹרָה

Vigorem

significat. Coc.

Regnum regno
praevaleret, sc.
populus prae po-
pulo robustior.

to execute and effect it. And many have strength to do those things (as to oppress a man, to take his goods or his life from him) for which they have no authority: both meet in the Lord, therefore he is the *Sovereign Lord*; he hath authority to do as much as he can, and he hath strength to do as much as he will. Some men would make strange work in the world, if they had strength sutable to their authority: and others would make a good world by their works, if they had authority sutable to their strength: both these meet in God; who can contend with him? *If we speak of strength, loe, he is strong!*

There are three things whercin this insuperableness of the strength of God appears.

1. He hath strength to do whatsoever he will, *There is nothing not fecible or too hard for him.*

2. He hath strength to do what he willeth not; the Lord is able to do more then ever he will do; he could presently take vengeance upon all the wicked, but he will not; he is patient and good toward them, who look not at all towards repentance, to which his goodness and patience lead them, *Rom. 2. 5.*

3. He is strong that he can do whatsoever imports strength, because he only doth what he will do. *To do that which is not our will to do, is a note of disability.* It argues a want of power to be forced to do a thing, as well as not to be able to do it. *He that doth what he would not, is not able to do what he would.* God is therefore able to do whatsoever he wills; because he never did nor can be drawn to do any thing against his will. It follows then, that the Lord is so strong that he can do whatsoever names him strong; and only cannot do those things, which if he did, he must be weak, as was further shewed at the fourth verse of this Chapter.

Secondly, Hence it appears, that

No creature is able to grapple with God.

He is strongest. The Apostle gives that admonition (*1 Cor. 10. 22.*) *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger then he?* Surely, except man thought he were able to match God, he would not be so fool-hardy, so vain, to throw down the Gauntlet, or enter the lists with God: *The weakness of God is stronger then men* (*1 Cor. 1. 25.*) not that there is any weakness in God, but take that which men conceive to be weakest or weakness in him, that's stronger then man. Or, *The weakness of God*, that is, the weakest

weakest instruments which God uses are stronger, *scil.* in their effects, then the strongest which men use. God can do more with ten men, then man can do with an hundred. The most stammering tongue and flattest language shall perswade more, if God speak with it, then the most fluent tongue and sparkling Orationary spoken meerly by man: *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong!*

And if of judgment, Who shall set me a time to plead?

If I cannot by force and power, may I not by subtilty and wit, by reason and argument, by eloquence and rhetorick prevail against him? No, *If of judgement, Who shall set me a time to plead?* As I cannot deal with God at the sword, or in the field; so neither can I deal with him at the bar, or at the judgement seat.

There are two words in the Hebrew which are used for judging. The first is, *Dan*, the name of one of the twelve Patriarchs, and from him of a Tribe in Israel; *Dan shall judge his people* (Gen. 49. 16.) And that word (in strictness) signifies to give doom or sentence in a cause. The other word is that in the Text, *Shaphat*, which signifies more especially the doing of right, or the righting of a man in any controversie. The Greek word takes in both. Now, while *Job* saith, *If of Judgement, or if we speak of Judgement*, the question is what judgement doth he mean?

שפוט
Judicium, iudicium,
ratio.

Κρίνω

Judgement is taken three wayes.

First, For the rule of judging, or for the Law whereby we judge. It is said (1 Sam. 10. 25.) that *Samuel* (after he had anointed *Saul* for King) told the people the manner of the Kingdome, and wrote it in a book. This manner of the Kingdome was not the common practise and custome of the Kingdome, but (it is the word of the text) the judgements of the Kingdome, that is, those rules and laws by which the Kingdom ought to be governed and judged.

Secondly, Judgement is put for an ability or fitness to judge, to discern and weigh things, to scan a cause, and try out the uttermost truth of every circumstance: judgement is the ability of the person judging. And

Thirdly, Judgement is taken for the sentence given upon the person judged, after the evidence of his cause is heard and taken. Judgement in this third sense is the result of the former two. For when by judgement, as it is the rule of judging, and an ability to judge, the Judge hath wrought and tryed out what the merit of a

mans cause, and the truth of a business in controversie is, then the issue of both is, *Judgement in this third sense*, that is, an act which is passed, or a sentence pronounced upon the person that standeth in, or the cause which is brought to judgement.

So, *if of judgement*, is, If I bring forth my cause to be tryed by the abilities of the Judge, and by the rule of the Law, this will be no releif to me, I shall be in as ill a case, as if I were to deal with God by plain strength.

There is an opinion that takes in a fourth sense about this word *judgement*, as if judgement were not a *forensicall*, or a *judicial term* in this text, but signified only afflictions or punishments upon a people or person. These are called the judgements of God, *Rom. 11.33. How unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out*; that is, the several acts which he passes upon men, his providences and outward dispensations (for he speaks of casting off of the Jews, and laying them aside; for so long a time, which is one of the greatest, if not the greatest judgement which God ever burdened his own Covenant people with) *These* (saith he) *are past finding out*. And then, *If I come to speak of judgement*, is, If I speak with God about his judgements shewed in those terrible providential acts upon others or upon my self, and cite him to answer for what he hath done towards me or them; who is able to plead? who will undertake this cause against the Lord?

Who shall set me a time to plead?

701

In suo Bal con-
dicere, conve-
nire et tempus
constituere pro-
prie significat.
In hiphil sicut
hic) convenire
facere

Conventus sta-
tis horis et lo-
cum aggregari
solutus. Catus,
Collegium, Ec-
clesia congregatio.

It is but one word which we translate, [*To set a time to plead*] but the sense is very large and various, it signifies to appoint, constitute or prescribe either time, place or persons, any or all the circumstantial of action. It is here translated by divers in reference to the time, And by some in reference to the place. And because the people of God are to meet at appointed times and places for solemn and publick worship, therefore this word signifies the Church or the Congregation, which is alwayes to meet by publick appointment at such a time, or in such a place, least there should be scatterings and confusions amongst those who should be most unanimous and harmonious. It is taken also for any meeting, *Psal. 48. 4. Lo the Kings were assembled or gathered together*, And *Amos 3. 3. Can two walk together except they be agreed? That is, except they be friends, They who have not one heart, seldome have one way. Or, except they be agreed, that is, upon time or place;*

two

two men cannot converse or have any business one with another, unless they consent and appoint *where and when*; if one be for this time and place, and the other for that, they can never walk together. It is put for a set time, 2 Sam. 24. 15. the Lord having sent the pestilence upon *Jerusalem* for the sin of David in numbering the people, it is said, the pestilence destroyed *from the morning even to the time appointed*; the Lord had set the pestilence a time, it wrought to that time, and no longer.

Further, The word is applyed to any Covenant, pact, or mutual agreement: Hence the Tabernacle is indifferently called, *The Tabernacle of the testimony*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Congregation*, because there God confirmed and settled his Covenant, and made an agreement with his people, and his people resorted to the Tabernacle to have the Articles of that Covenant made good to them by his own appointment. Hence (I say) it was called, *The Tabernacle of witness*, *The Tabernacle of the Testament*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Covenant*. Upon this ground also all the solemn feasts of the Jews were express by this general word, they being all observed at set times and places. And for this reason the word is used for the grave. So in the 30th of this book of Job, verse 23. which we translate thus, *The house appointed for all living*; there is a time when, and a place appointed where all that live shall be laid down when they dye, or where their bodies shall be housed after they are dissolved; therefore it is called, *The house of appointment*, the house which the Lord hath settled both for time and place where it shall be made, and when we shall be carried to it. No man goes to his grave by accident; the Lord hath appointed man his place, and bounded his habitation, when he is dead, as well as while he lived.

Again, For a clearer understanding of this, it may have an allusion to that course which is observed in *Courts of Justice*, where, when either *Plaintiff* or *defendant* wants counsell to plead for him, the *Court assigns counsell*; and it is observed by the learned, that among the *Romans*, the *Pretor* would say, *What, is there none to plead for him? I will appoint one to take his cause into consideration, and to plead for him*. It is ordinary with our Judges to appoint counsell, as also time and place, when and where to hear causes. The words may have an allusion to this course of Judges; *If I come to Judgement, who will assign me counsell? where shall I get any one to plead this cause, and to stand up for me against the Lord?*

There

Obel-Mogned.
Tabernaculum
testimonij, i. e.
publicæ fidei
in Deum et ho-
mines contra-
ta, &c. Pined.

Beih-Mogned.

Pretor dicere
solebat, Si ad-
vocatum non
habet, ego da-
bo.

*Nemo audet
pro me testimo-
nium dicere.
Vulg.*

There is yet another understanding of the word, as having reference to the testimony or witness which is brought in. So the Vulgar reads it. No man will be so bold as to give in evidence for me, or be a witness on my behalf.

Take all these senses, *If I come to judgement, who, &c. I shall get none to give in evidence for me, none to plead for me, I shall get none to assign counsel for me, none to appoint time and place for a hearing;* Therefore I may as well contend with God by strength, as by judgement. The sum of all is, Job confesses, in case he had a mind to go this way, he should not find any in the world to assist or help him in it.

We have had divers passages of like nature with this, wherein Job declared his utter inability to plead with God; therefore I shall but briefly note one thing from it.

There is no standing before God in judgement by the help of any creature.

Who shall set me a time to plead? Or, who shall be my pleader? One man cannot do it for another; all the Angels in heaven are not able to do it for any man. If man enter into judgement with God, men and Angels cannot help him. As the Apostle speaks in another case about the want of love, *If I speak with the tongue of men and Angels, and have not charity, it profits me nothing:* So, if we should speak for our selves, or others for us, with the tongues of men, that is, with the tongues of the most excellent Oratours or pleaders, yea, with the tongues of Angels, with tongues that exceed all that men can speak, yet in judgement with God these will be but *sounding brass, and tinkling Cymbals.*

Job goes on yet a step further. *If I should undertake to manage my cause my self* (some Clients will desire their counsellor to stand by, and they will argue their own cause) *why, saith Job, If I should do so, if I should be my own Advocate, or Attorney, and appear my self in my own cause, it would be all one, If I justify my self, my own mouth shall condemn me, I shall be as bad, if not worse then before. I can get none to plead for me, and if I plead for my self, I am sure to be cast, I cannot mend my self by speaking in my own cause;* that's the meaning of this 20th verse, which is but a continuation, with a further illustration, of what he had spoken before, therefore I shall but touch upon it.

Verse 20. *If I justify my self.*

That is, if witnesses fail, and counsel fail, if all help and succours fail me, and then *I* resolve to go to work with my own strength and wit, if *I* go about to make or declare my self just before God (for so the word is to be understood, as in the doctrine of justification) What shall *I* gain? the profit will not countervail the charge, or pay for the expence of one breath; For

Mine own mouth shall condemn me.

My tongue would cut my own throat; the sentence or words which *I* should bring forth to plead my cause before God, would be found against me; the Lord would turn all my arguments back upon me, and wound me with mine own weapons. *I* should go out condemned, and my plea would be turned into sin. *I* shall certainly spoyl my cause, if *I* handle it. As, if *I* should put it into the hands of Angels or men, they could make nothing of it, so neither can *I* make any thing of it, if *I* manage it my self.

There are three things which evince that if man undertake the matter with God, he shall be condemned by his own mouth.

First, Man is unsufficient. How can he, who is ignorant, weak and unrighteous, plead his cause with God, who is infinite in wisdom, righteousness and holiness? and therefore mans own mouth will condemn him, his words will speak him guilty, while he plead, *Not guilty.*

Secondly, He that justifies himself must appear in his own commendation, he must bring forth all his good works, and shew the Lord how he hath fasted, prayed, and mourned, how humble, how liberal he hath been, what alms he hath given, he must (as it were) paint and adorn himself in all his excellencies, and stand before the Lord in this array. Now mans own mouth must condemn him, if he do thus. The Heathen could say by the light of nature, *That a mans praises are sullied by passing thorow his own lips. To sound our own praise, sounds our own shame.* If a man have never so much worth in him, he dishonours himself by being the trumpet of it.

Thirdly, A mans own testimony is not legal in his own cause. *The same person must not be a witness and a party.* He that justifies himself, condemns himself, for his very justification is an accusation. If a mans own witness may be taken, who shall be condemn-

Os meum, i. e. meum testimonium, mea oratio. Exibo ex hujusmodi iudicio condemnatus, et oratio mea fiet in peccatum.

Ut laus sic testimonium proprio sordescit in ore.

ed?

Hominis innocentia duobus testibus constare debet 1 Deo 2 Conscientia Ergo si tibi videris habere bonum conscientiae testimonium, bene quidem, sed divinum adhuc de tua innocentia expectandum est.

ed? Who will not acquit himself? The witness of our own hearts is much (1 Job. 3. 21.) but not enough, *If our own hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* But the reason of this confidence is not in the bare, single witness of our own hearts, but in the co-witness of God with our hearts. Conscience is therefore a thousand witnesses, because God who is more than a thousand consciences, joyns with conscience both in accusing and in acquitting. The Pharisees said unto Christ, *Thou bearest record of thy self, thy record is not true* (Joh. 8. 13, 16.) They spake upon a legall ground or maxime; Christ answereth, *Though I bear record of my self, yet my record is true.* Christ doth not deny the rule, but shews that he was above it, and therefore adds, *It is said in your Law, that the testimony of two men is true, I am not alone, for the Father is with me:* As if he had said, I alone bear not witness of my self, I have another, even the Father that sent me, he beareth witness of me, therefore mine is not a single testimony; in that case indeed I were to be reprov'd, and my witness were insufficient, *My own mouth would condemn me*, if there were no mouth to testify for me, but only mine; If I were but as an ordinary man, I might be kept to the ordinary rule. *God only is a sufficient witness to himself.*

Mine own mouth shall condemn me. But of what? Surely of folly (2 Cor. 12. 11.) *I became a fool in glorying*, saith Paul to his Corinthians; but I am not a fool of my own making, *ye have compelled me*, for I ought to have been commended of you. That is, ye ought to have given a testimony of me; if ye had been just to me, I had been condemn'd in justifying my self. Then it is a duty to witness for our selves, when others neglect that duty.

The Original word which we translate *condemn*, is directly opposite to that which we translate *justify*; and some render it by a new-coyn'd word in Latine, which we cannot put literally into English, but by coining a word for it, thus; *If I justify my self, my own mouth would ungodlifie me, or declare me to be ungodly.*

Here two Questions arise, the one is, why may not Job justify himself? The Lord had justified him, the Lord said that he was a perfect man (that's the next expression, *If I say I am perfect it shall prove me perverse.*) The Lord had said of Job, Chap. 1. *That he was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil;* why may not Job say as much of himself, as the Lord had done?

Solomon

עֲשֵׂה
Proprie sonat
impijficare, ut
P^{er}B justifyca-
e. Merc.
In jorma Hi-
phil non effi-
tionem deno-
tat, sed decla-
rationem.

Solomon resolves this query (Prov. 27. 2.) *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth, a stranger, and not thine own lips.* Man must not speak the evil he knows by others, unless called, nor the good he knows by himself. To speak good of our selves with our own mouths, is much like doing good by other mens hands. We must not act things praise-worthy by *proxie*, but it is best to be praised by *proxie* for our good acts. Now as man may not praise himself, though other men may praise him : So he must not praise himself though God praiseth him. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but he whom the Lord commendeth,* 2 Cor. 10. 18.

Secondly, Why doth *Job* say here, *I will not justifie my self, I will not say I am perfect?* Whereas in other places he justifies himself, and saith that he was perfect; if you read the 29th and 30th Chapters of this book, you shall find them to be but a continued justification of himself, or a *manifest of his own innocency*. There he proclaims how holy he had been, and how righteous in all his wayes, that he had put on judgement as a robe, and justice as a diadem, that he had delivered the oppressed, and distributed of his fulness to the necessities of the poor. Those two Chapters being a professed Catalogue of his good deeds, why is he so shie and modest here?

I answer, In this and the like expressions, while *Job* saith, he will not justifie himself, or say, he is perfect, he declines the plea of personal righteousness or perfection in the sight of God, as hath frequently appeared in this argument. But in those Chapters and in other places where he is upon his defence, he speaks only in reference to the charge of his friends; As if he had said, *Ye accuse me for an hypocrite, and censure me deeply, I can justifie my self, and plead my innocency with you, though I have not a word to say for myself before the Lord; I will berr any thing at his hands, let him say of me, and do with me what he pleaseth, I will take shame to myself, and give him glory; but as for you my friends, I will justifie myself in your sight, I am not the man ye take me for.*

These speakings are not cross to each other, but helps us to understand of *Jobs* sense in this argument. He stands much upon his integrity, but it is to his friends; he humbles himself in the sight of his own vileness, but it is to God. *Paul* (Rom. 7. 24.) bewails his sinfulness, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and of death!* I find a law in my members, re-

Pis sensus pul-
chre expressus
in hac Jobi di-
sputatione, nunc
peccatum suum
dimisse confi-
tentis, nunc
justitiam suam
acerrime defen-
dentis. Merl.

belliſh againſt the law of my mind : Yet when he answers falſe Apoſtles about his perſonal carriage, and the diſcharge of his Apoſtleſhip, then he ſaith, *I know nothing by my ſelf* (1 Cor 4. 4.) I am charged thus and thus, I am ſlandered ſo and ſo, but my conſcience acquits me, *I know nothing by my ſelf*; the ſinfulneſs of his nature made him groan and ſigh out, *O wretched man that I am*; The ſincerity of his heart made him boaſt and ſing out like a happy man, as ſorrowful, but alwayes rejoycing. A man may be conſcious of his own natural corruption, and yet confident of his own practical integrity.

If I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.

רשע וצדק

ad ſuſta
וּפְקַדְנִי
ad a-
nimam referun-
tur.

These words in ſtrictneſs of ſenſe refer to the inward purpoſe of his heart, or bent of his mind, as the former did to the outward way of his life, *If I ſay I am perfect*, that is, if I ſay there is no meditated obliquity in my heart, no intended goings aſtray, or wandrings, no cloſe hypocriſie or falſeneſs there; if I ſhould ſay, I am perfect in the bent and purpoſes of my heart, yet this is not ſuch as I dare appear before God in. As if I juſtifie my ſelf by the actings and puttings forth of my life, *My mouth will condemn me*. So if I ſay I am perfect in the thinkings and ſecret motions of my ſpirit, *it will prove me perverſe*.

וְהָיָה
Qui certo eſt
propoſito וּפְקַדְנִי
qui vago &
diverſo, qui ſe
dividit & di-
ſtorquet in duas
vias. Coc.
In Hebræo ſim-
plex eſt, per-
verſificavit me.

The word which we translate (*perverſe*) ſignifies to wander as a man uncertain of his way (Prov. 28. 18.) *Whoſo walketh uprightly* (having the frame of his inward man right) *he ſhall be ſaved but he that is perverſe in his wayes*) having a wandering vagrant mind, going ſometime this way, and ſometime that, holding ſomewhat of this, and ſomewhat of that, but nothing to purpoſe or ſteadily of any thing, this man ſhall fall at once; a man of an uncertain ſpirit, ſhall have a certain downfall. But was Job thus perverſe? No, Job was perfect, and not perverſe: yet a boaſt of his perfection had been a proof of his perverſeneſs. Nothing diſcovers an evil heart more then a profeſſion of its own goodneſs.

It ſhall prove me perverſe.

Perverſus eva-
dant.

What ſhall prove me perverſe? Some refer it to the former claufe, *My mouth* (or the ſpeaking of thoſe words: *I am perfect*) ſhall prove me perverſe. Others refer it to God, *God will prove me perverſe*, if I juſtifie my ſelf. The Seventy leave it without reſtriction

striction to any antecedent, *If I say I am perfect, I shall go away perverse, or I shall appear perverse.*

Observe hence that famous Gospel-doctrine, *No man can be justified before God by the works of the law.* It is as noble a proof of free justification in the old Testament, as any in the new. The Saints have been acquainted with this truth from the beginning. That man is nothing in himself, and that free grace doth all. The doctrine of free grace is no new doctrine: the doctrine of free will is. (Prov. 20. 9.) *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* And that he must say, who justifies himself before God. Every legal Justiciary takes up this language, *I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin.* It is a task too hard for men, yea, for all the Angels in Heaven to make one heart clean: only Jesus Christ is able to fetch out the filth and rubbish that lodgeth in, and pollutes our spirits. *To be a heart-cleanser is the peculiar work and honour of Christ.* A man that knows himself and sees his face in the glass of the word (which flatters no man) will never say, *I am clean*: nor will he say, *I can cleanse my self.* How many spots and blots, how many defects and deformities will that glass represent unto him, which he is not able to heal or fetch out? Every mans face will blush, who sees his heart or his life in that glass, unless he, *Who beholding himself goeth his way, and straight way forgetteth what manner of man he was* (Jam 1. 24.)

Secondly, Observe, Job had received testimony from God. He could produce *Letters testimonial, subscribed by the hand of heaven, that he was a just and a perfect man, one that feared God and eschewed evil.* Yet this Job (let God speak as well as he will of him) will not speak well of himself to God: Let God report him perfect to men, he will not report himself perfect before God. Though Job had a free & a full certificate of his innocency (not one bought begged, or got with flattery) yet he forbears in this case to bring it forth, and read it to his friends. *They who have most real worth and holiness in them, are least in their own eyes, and lowest in their own thoughts: they of whom God gives the fairest testimony, give the meanest of themselves;* he cares not much to appear to be, what God assures him, he is. God was positive (*without Ifs or Ands*) in his opinion of him, *Thou art perfect*, but he puts it into a supposition, and concludes with an *if*, *If I were perfect*, &c.

In the 21. verse Job carries on the same business, and bewrayes a more humble and self-denying frame of mind then before.

*Nobilis locus
clarissime ostendens
neminem
ex lege justificari.*
Coc.

*Quot tenebrae,
quot nubes, quot
maculae? quem
non pudebit, si
fidem suam et
innocentiam ad
illustre illud
legis speculum
contempletur.*
Coc.

Though I were perfect, yet, &c.

There is a contention among interpreters, to which part of the Chapter this 21. verse belongs, whether to that which went before, or to that which follows after. I shall open it first, as the sense of it may be connected with the matter preceeding.

Verse 21. *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soul; I would despise my life.*

Though I were perfect.

Observe the gradation. He had said before, If I plead with God, and justify my self, I shall be condemned and proved perverse. But put my case at the best, that I justifying my self, the Lord should accept my justification, and should concur with my vote, that I am perfect, yet I could take no joy in this: If the Lord should condescend to know me under that notion, I would not adventure to know my own soul under the notion of my perfections. The thing is an abhorring to me,

I would not know my soul.

Why not? There are two senses given: first, thus, *If I were perfect*, that is, if upon debate and pleading with God I should come off perfect in my own judgement, certainly then I did not know my own soul. That's one sense, and so it falls in well with the former words; *If I should justify my self, my mouth would prove me perverse*. And so the point that I shall note from it, is,

That ignorance of our selves is the cause of proud and high thoughts of our selves.

He that knows himself, must know himself to be imperfect, seeing our greatest perfection in this life, is, to know our own imperfections. When we see any standing upon their own bottoms, and crying up themselves, poor souls, how are they benighted! How little do they know of their own hearts or lives! How little do they know of God! they are in darkness, therefore they see not their own spots. If a man, whose face is foul or deformed should boast of his beauty, would you not say, this man knows not his own face? Or surely, he hath not looked in a glass to day; May we not much rather say to him who justifies himself, and saith he is perfect? Sure you never saw your face in the glass, in that pure Chrystal glass of the Word. He that is in Gospel-light
sees

sees himself; and as light encreaseth, so doth his sight of himself. And the more he sees himself, the more evil he sees in himself. In a cloudy day we think the air is clear, but the shining of the Sun, shews us millions of motes in the air: If a man see no motes in his life (some see not beams there) it is because he walks in darkness, and hath not the light. *He doth not know his own soul.* That's a usefull interpretation of the words, and the first sense.

Secondly, *If I were perfect*; If it should be told me I were perfect, I would not know my own soul; that is, I would not take notice of my self, as perfect, I would be a stranger to my self under that title, I would shake the thoughts of such a perfection out of my mind, as much as I would shake the thoughts of sinfull corruption out of my mind. It is as dangerous to lodge or nourish thoughts of our own perfection, as to lodge thoughts of the most sinfull corruptions. *A holy heart loves good thoughts, but it loves not thoughts of its own goodness.*

So then, *I would not know my own soul* imports not affected ignorance, but elected knowledge. Job was no stranger to his own soul, he had studied himself, and was well versed in his own bosom. *Self-knowledge is a duty.* And self-knowledge may be a sin. Christians should read themselves more then books, and yet they may pore too much upon themselves. Heathens gave us this lesse, and they say it came from heaven, *know thyself.* Augustine is quick upon it; Lord, I know M E, and I know T H E E. To know God and our selves is the sum of all knowledge. God doth not know him, who knows not himself. There is a double knowledge of our selves.

First, Of sinfull self, or of our sins and failings.

Secondly, Of renewed self, or our vertues and graces. Not to know how frail we are, how sinfull we are, to what temptations and corruptions we are most subject, is a sinfull and corrupt ignorance. To know our imperfections, is a part of our perfection.

Secondly, Not to know our graces and vertues, what the work of the Spirit, and the nature within us is, this also is a sinfull ignorance. *It is no honour to be what we do not know our selves to be; it is to be in the state of a beast, not to reflect upon our own estate.* The new creature is light, and carries a light for its own discovery. The reproveable knowledge of our own souls is not the knowledge of intuition, whereby we apprehend what we are,

buc

*Talem de me
cogitationem
non admittam,
sed omnino con-
temnam, & de
mente mea pe-
nitentia excutiam.
Quantum vis,
bene, recteq;
vixerim, hoc
penitus despi-
ciam. Bold.
Admirabili Co-
muni acceptio-
ne dignissima
doctrina, ac si
esset ex purissi-
mis evangelii
fontibus haurita
E caelo de-
scendit, Nosce
teipsum.
Noverim me,
noverim te.
August.*

*Talis ignorantia
a Deo ignora-
tur.*

*Non noscere a-
nimam, phras
est Hebræa, quæ
tantum rei de-
spectum præ se
fert, ut illam et-
iam respicere
aut aliquo mo-
do noscere quis
veniat.*

but the *knowledge of ostentation*, whereby we are proud of, or trust upon what we are. We have an ordinary saying amongst us, which reacheth this sense fully, Such a woman is beautiful, and *she knows it*; such a one is a proper man, and *he knows it*; Such a one hath many good, a very fine wit, and *he knows it*; that is, such persons pride and lift themselves up in their perfections. You shall have a soul that will know it self into I know not how much pride; many stand reflecting upon their own perfections, either external, how proper, strong and beautiful they are; or internal, how witty and eloquent they are, what excellent parts and gifts, what a nimble tongue, what sound judgments they have, till they lose Christ in this croud of themselves. This is a dangerous knowledge, a knowledge worse then ignorance. *Better be without knowledge then know our knowledge thus.* As to reflect upon sin, to know our selves in our unbeleif, vanity and passions, &c. humble us: And a soul in confessing of sin before God, looks long upon his dark part, upon his wants and failings, for this end, that he may be humbled: so to reflect upon our good deeds or graces, to know our selves in those adornings of love, patience, humility, faith, &c. hazzards us upon pride; and some stand gazing so long upon these excellencies, that they are lifted up, and become very proud.

Thus all men who are proud in spirituals, *Know their own souls.* So *Job would not know his own soul.*

Hence observe, that

A gracious heart rejoiceth in nothing but in the righteousness of Christ alone.

He will not know his soul in his own perfections. A godly man would have God know him in the worst, but he will not know himself in the best. He would not have a sin hid from God, but he would hide all his goodness from himself. He will know every good thing before he doth it, but when 'tis done he cares not to know it any more. So the Apostle (Phil. 3.8,9.) *I account all things but losse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, &c.* Paul the Apostle would not know Paul the Pharisee. Legal righteousness was losse to him, when he had found Christ: Legal righteousness was dung to him, when he had a sight of righteousness by Christ.

The

The Pharisee (*Luk. 18.*) had all upon account, and he hoped to make good gain upon his accounts: he knew how many alms he had given, how well he paid his tithes, and how often he had fasted. He made a stock of those things, and put them among his treasures, which *Paul* made his loss, and put among the dung. He that thus knows his own soul, hath no true knowledge of Jesus Christ.

So much of this 21 verse, as it is a supposition, and hath connexion with the words fore-going. As it refers to what follows.

The words are rendred in the form of a position, *I am perfect, I know not my soul, I despise my life.* And so divers interpretations are given of it.

First thus, *I am perfect, &c.* that is, my heart is upright, and I have ever prized and valued mine own integrity at such a rate that in comparison thereof, I have not at all regarded, or prized my own life or soul, that is, the greatest comforts and sweetest enjoyments of my life. *My life is but a trifle to my conscience.* And so the meaning is, like that (*Dent. 33. 9.*) where the word *know*, is used in this sense, concerning *Levi*, *Who said to his father and mother I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own Children.* *Levi* sleighted all relations, when they stood in competition with the discharge of that duty, which the Lord called him to, he knew neither father, nor mother nor brother, nor child, one nor other, he had no regard at all to them, so he might do the will of God. This was the commendation of *Levi*, and the priviledge of the Priest-hood was assigned to that Tribe upon this service. Grace will not hearken to the cry of nature, when it hears the call of God. *Job* is conceived to speak here at the same rate, as *Levi* did, or higher, *I am upright and perfect in heart toward God, and such hath my perfection and uprightness been, that I have not known my own soul, I have not regarded any self-interests, which have stood in the way of my obedience unto God, or justice toward man.* His friends charged him as if he had been a corrupt Judge, or an oppressour of the poor; I (saith he) am so far from valuing worldly goods or riches beyond my own integrity, that I do not value my life to my integrity. The Apostle *Paul* makes a like profession (*Act. 20. 24.*) His spirit was so free and royall, as when he was going bound in spirit to *Jerusalem*, the Spirit witnessing to him, that bonds and afflictions did abide him in every City. None of these things (saith he) move me, neither count I my
life

Non novi animam pro integritate mea, i. e. ea integritate sum, ut nunquam animæ aut vitæ meæ ratione abduci posuerim ab integritate mea.

life dear (I will not know my life, let it go which way it will) so I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus. Paul was none of your poor merchants, who are afraid of their skins. Paul's life was cheap in his thoughts when he was to make an adventure for Christ, he (as Job here) would not know his life, for the omission of a necessary known duty, or the commission of a known sin.

This first sense yields this profitable meditation.

He whose heart is upright prefers his uprightness before all worldly commodities, and before his own life.

Christ calls his Disciples to this height of resolution (Luk. 14. 26.) *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother and children, yea, and his own life, he cannot be my Disciple:* That is, the service of Christ, and his life being put into the ballance; life must be a light thing weighed with the service of Christ.

אני אומר
Abjuro dolore
et sic alicui
ter sumetur
quam priore
versiculo. Ne-
scio animam,
i. e. me ipsum
pro dolore,
ideo aversor
vitam meam.
Rab. Levi.

A second interpretation gives this sense, *I am perfect, yet I know not my own soul*; that is, I am so pressed and overwhelmed with these afflictions, that I cannot feel my self, I scarce know whether I am alive or dead: I know not where I am, my soul doth not act its offices, my soul is (as it were) benumbed in me, or asleep; there is not that vigour or activity in my spirit, which I have found heretofore, I despise such a life as this is, who would live a life which is a continued death? there is a truth in this. For as extream and excessive joyes carry a man so far beyond himself, that he scarce knows whether he be alive or no (some have had experience of such raptures and extasies of joy in communion with God) 'Twas so with Paul in a case somewhat like (2 Cor. 12.) *Whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell* (saith he) for my part, I could not tell what to make of my self, or what became of my body: As (I say) it is thus in the excesses of spiritual joy and consolation; so sometimes in the excesses of anguish and sorrow, a man scarce knows whether he be alive or dead, what his state is, whether in the body or out of the body: he regards neither hot nor cold, friend or foe, wife or children, he forgets to eat his bread.

A third expounds the words as an admiration, *I am perfect, and do ye think I know not my own soul?* Do ye think I am not acquainted with my self? Am I a stranger at home? have I so despised my life (think ye) that I take no notice of it, and am either careless or insensible how things go with me? As if he had said,

said, *I am perfect, and this is the work of a man, whose wayes are perfect before the Lord, he knows and considers his own soul, and grows assured how matters are with him: Ye my friends charge me with these and these failings, and will force them upon me, whether I will or no: though I deny your charge, yet ye re-joyn, and re-affirm it upon me, as though I knew not my own soul, or as if ye knew me better then my self. But I am perfect in heart, and I know my own soul, I do not so despise my life, as if it were not worth the looking after, or as if I were not worth the ground I go upon.*

Lastly, Others understand it thus (which appears the fairest and most suitable interpretation of these latter ones) *I am perfect,* *Integer sum, nec* neither do I know my own soul; that is, I am not conscious of any *scio animam* evil in my soul, I know of no secret guilt or corruption hidden *meam, i.e. quic-* there: and so science is put for conscience: *quam perversi* *in anima mea.* I know not, is, I am not privy to any evil that my soul delights in, and keeps close, either against God or man, yet such evils are upon me that I despise my life. *The Spirit of a man (saith Solomon) will bear his infirmity.* Then, what a load of infirmity presses that man, whose life is a burthen to him, though no sin burden his spirit. Troubles of conscience do often make the most peaceable outward estate of this life troublesome. And troubles in the outward estate may make those who have great peace of conscience weary of their lives. What it is to despise life, and that afflictions make this life burdensome, hath been shewed in the third and sixth Chapters, and will come more fully to be considered at the first verse of the tenth Chapter, whether I refer the Reader, and forbear to insist upon it here.

I shall only add, that Job makes these words as a transition to the second part of his answer to the charge of Bildad. For having before given glory to God by acknowledging his justice, wisdom, power and sovereignty in all his actings, he passes to an apology for himself, or a defence of his own integrity against the insultations, suspicions and accusations of his friends; as if he had said, *I have desired to save the honour of God from the least touch of an un-* comely thought; much more then do I abhor proud and rude con- tendings with him: But as for you, my friends, ye must give me leave to be plain with you, I am not the man ye take me for, I have none of that baseness of spirit with which ye charge me, I am no hypocrite, I am perfect in heart with God, and upright in my dealings with men. And yet I cannot but complain of my

Ingreddur in
alteram suae re-
sponsionis par-
tem qua iustiti-
am suam defen-
dit a gravi &
libera integri-
tatis sua et
animi bene con-
scit assertions.
Merl.

sad afflictions, and renew my desires that the Lord would give me ease by death, and acquit me from the bands of these calamities by cutting the threed of my life. I know ye judge these outward evils, as the brand of a wicked man, of a man hated by God. But I'll maintain a proposition contradictory to that your opinion: ye shall never prove me wicked, because afflicted, for thus I hold, and I will hold it against you all, as long as I am able to speak, that the Lord destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. The argument may be formed up thus.

That cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety, which falleth alike upon the good and bad.

But great and destroying outward afflictions fall equally upon good and bad.

Therefore great and destroying afflictions cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety.

The proof of the minor proposition or assumption, is contained in the three verses immediately following. The discussion and opening of which will give both life and strength to this argument.

JOB Chap. 9. Vers. 22, 23, 24.

This is one thing, therefore I said it, he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the tryall of the innocent.

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?

Videtur hic locus impietatem in ludere quasi apud Job, unum & idem sit pi-orum et impro- b-orum judici- um, quodq; De- us hæc inferi- ora non curat. Ibid. clar.

THis speech of Job caused a learned interpreter to tremble, when he read it, conceiving that it favoured strongly of impiety and blasphemy, as if Job had mingled the state of the wicked and of the righteous in one; or, as if his mind were, that the Lord did not distinctively order the affairs of the world by the dictates of his wise providence, but left them to be hudled together by inexorable fate, or blind fortune; therefore he concludes that Job rather personates a man void of the true knowledge and fear.

fear of God, then speaks his own opinion. Thus he censures: but let Job be well weighed, and his discourse will appear full of truth and holiness.

This is one thing, therefore I said it.

This is one thing.] As if he had said, You have spoken many things to me about the power, greatness, justice and wisdom of God, in all which I agree with you, ye and I have no difference about those points, I have alwayes thought highly of God, and I desire to think humbly of my self; but *here is one thing*, wherein I must for ever disagree from you, here we must part.

*Hæc unum est
mea assertio
caput.*

So that this verse is as the *limit-stone* between Jobs opinion, and that of his friends. Here he speaks out the *special tenet* which he holds in opposition to them. As if he had said, I yield, and subscribe to your judgement in all but this one, and *in this one thing* I must be your adversary, though I will not be your enemy, *I say it, and say it again,*

He destroyeth both the righteous, and the wicked.

This one thing.] *This is uniform:* So Mr Bronghton reads it, and in this thing I am uniform, or of the same mind and judgement, I am not at all moved from my hold, or shaken by any thing ye have said.

Therefore I said it.] That is, because I am of this opinion and judgement, therefore I will not conceal, but bring it forth, and tell you plainly what my thoughts are. The manner of speech, *I said it*, signifies a vehement asseveration, a liberty and boldness of speech, or a constant adhering and sticking to what hath been asserted, I will abide by this position as long as I live, I cannot be beaten from it, not because it is my opinion, but because it is a truth.

Before I come to the assertion it self, observe from the preface, *this is one thing,*

That truth is ever the same, and we should be the same in maintaining truth.

When a man speaks a thing, of which he is very sure and resolved to hold, he saith, in our language, *That's once*, that is, I have said it, and I will not unsay it, or eat my words. As Pilate, when he was desired to change the inscription which he had put upon the cross of Christ, answered, *What I have written, I have written,*

I will not alter a letter or a tittle : So a confident assertor answers, *What I have said, I have said ; This is one thing, therefore I said it.* Truth changes not, why then should I, who have borne witness to this truth. *Truth must be stood to.* We have reason to stick to truth, for truth will stick to us ; we may say it, and say it again, for it will do us good again and again. ¶ The declarative truth of God is like Christ, the essential truth, *The same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Though it be very old, yet, *it waxeth not old.*

And because this in the text was a great truth, the very hinge upon which the whole dispute between *Job* and his friends turned, therefore he is so resolute in it. Whence note further,

That great and fundamental truths are to be maintained with much boldness and strength of resolution.

As it is a good bargain to buy a little truth with the expence of much peace : so it is our wisdom, as well as our duty, to maintain it with the expence of our peace. They are the worst sort of cowards who render up the *Holds of Truth* upon composition. No terms honourable enough can be given for the giving up of that. I grant that our peace and lives are richer commodities, then should be hazarded about trifling niceties, and the crochets of *Schoolmen* : but we ought to contend earnestly (and we cannot contend too resolutely) for the faith which was once delivered to the *Saints* (*Jude. v. 3.*)

Observe thirdly, *A man that hath got one sound principle about any point, will from that refute and repell all objections that can come against him.*

Super hoc axi-
ma tanquam
super firmam
fundamen-
tum, quicquid
ad suæ inno-
centiæ con-
tra eos defensi-
onem allatus
est, stabilit.
Bold.

Job bottoms himself upon this principle, that God destroyes both good and bad alike with outward destruction. This is his great Axiome, the very foundation upon which he buildeth all he holds contradictory to his friends ; the *Fort-Royal* in which he defends himself against all their oppositions and assaults. One truth well mann'd and manag'd scatters and foils a whole Army of errors. One text thorowly understood gives answer to all objections, and unties all the knots of a controversie.

But what's this one thing upon which *Job* makes his boast, and cries *victoria* ? 'Tis this, *He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.* A harsh doctrine, yet a good one. God is to be honoured destroying, as well as saving, killing, as well as making alive.

The word which we translate to destroy, signifies an utter blot-
ting

ting out for consumption of a thing, noting that the outward dispensations of God may be severe and terrible to the perfect, as well as to the wicked. He doth not say, the Lords afflicts the one, and destroyes the other; chastens the one, and consumes the other; but he consumes and destroyes the one, as well as the other, He destroyes

Proprie delet, disperdit, frequenter ad extremam consummationem et consumptionem referitur.

The perfect.

Who is a perfect man in the language of Scripture, and wherein this perfection consists, hath been opened more then once already, and therefore I shall not stay upon it here. Only in general, the perfect man is the man in the highest form of holiness; a man full of knowledge, faith and good works, one of the first three in grace, yea he may be the first of the three, yet all this is no security against the forest affliction, against affliction to destruction temporal, He destroyeth the perfect

ON

And the wicked.

Or the unquiet and tumultuous man. Every wicked man is an unsettled, and an unquiet man. He hath no where to rest who hath not Christ to rest upon: He is alwayes out of the way, who is not in him, who is the way. Wicked men rest only in doing evil, they are never quiet but in motions unto sin. God shews their nature in their name. Unquiet is their name, and unquietness is with them. Wicked men trouble and vex others as much as they can, but they trouble and vex themselves most of all.

VW7

Inquietum per multas hujus saeculi curas solitudineque vagantem.

By these wicked ones the Septuagint understand mighty and rich men. Riches are so often got by wickedness, and are occasions to so many of making them wicked, that wicked and rich may sometimes change names, or signifie the same person.

LXX. Impium pro potente et locuplete sumunt.

One of the Greek Expositors understands the text, of those who are great in goodness, and strong in faith, He destroyes the perfect, and he destroyes him that is most perfect, even the most eminent in holiness, the tallest Cedars in grace. As if the words implied only a gradation of good men, and not a distinction of good and bad.

Qui pietate insignis et vita clarus Polych. Olymp.

But the letter of the text hath no shew of reason at all for such an interpretation, and therefore I shall pass it by, and take the words as our translation renders them, holding forth that grand dichotomy of mankind, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

This

This *Job* affirms against *Bildads* assertion (*Chap. 8. 20.*) who there gives his judgement thus. *God will not cast away a righteous man*; which (though it may have a true sense, yet *Bildads* meaning being, that God will not cast a godly man away in this life, or totally destroy him in temporals) *Job* denies, affirming that a godly man may not only be afflicted, but afflicted all his life, and die under that affliction, which in *Bildads* sense is *to be cast away*. For though *Bildad* did not hold (as *Eliphaz*) that every man who is afflicted, is afflicted for wickedness (he thought a good man might be afflicted for the tryal and exercise of his graces) yet he was very confident, that God never suffered a righteous man to be overwhelmed with affliction: but after some short, though sharp assaults, restored him again. And therefore *Bildad* numbred them also with the wicked, who were destroyed as well as afflicted. This *Job* refutes and argues against all along, constantly holding the contrary principle, that a godly man may be so afflicted, as to be destroyed, that he may be utterly and for ever stript of worldly comforts. Hence observe,

Good and bad, righteous and wicked, are often involved in the same outward evils.

The spiritual estate of a righteous man is so strong, and ordered in all things, that he can neither totally nor finally fall from, or lose it, *Grace is above these hazards*. But the temporal estate of a righteous man may be lost, both totally and finally. Riches and health, and honour, are like themselves, whosoever is their master, fading and perishing. A righteous man hath a higher tenure of things below, and holds them upon better terms than a wicked man doth; yet he holds them but for a term, they are not enduring substance to him, as not to others. *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked* (*Psal. 37. 16.*) But the righteous may be deprived of what he hath, as soon as any of the wicked. (*Eccles. 9. 1.*) *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; as is the good so is the sinner, and he that sweareth as he that feareth an oath.* Externals distinguish not internals. No mans spiritual estate is knowable by the view of his temporal. *Say to the Land of Israel, thus saith the Lord, Behold, I am against thee, and I will draw forth my sword out of his sheath,* (*Ezek. 21. 3.*) And what will the Lord do with it? will he not bathe it in the blood of his enemies, and sheath it in the bowels of wicked

wicked men? he will: but shall it be bathed in the blood of none else? The next words resolve the doubt, *And I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* It is a terrible sentence: sword, famine, pestilence make no difference of men or manners; they know neither *faces nor hearts*. The best in a Nation may taste the bloody cup, and feel the cold Iron in their bowels, together with the worst. The *green tree, and the dry tree* may be devoured by the same fire, as the Prophet shadows good and bad, or as some think good and better, falling into the same calamity (Ezek. 20. 47.) with which that of Christ (Luk. 23. 31.) seems more agreeable. The basket of good figs goes into captivity with the basket of evil figs, under which the good and bad among the Jews were typed, Jer. 24. 1, 2, 3.

But though they fall under the same destruction, yet their case under it is as different, as the persons are. Faith and holy reason distinguish where sense cannot.

Judgements upon the wicked men, are for satisfaction to the justice of God. They who are heirs of eternal death, receive part of their inheritance in this life. *All their punishments are payments,* The fore-tastes and beginnings of farther sorrows. These judgements upon the Saints are only corrective or purgative. Their hopes are not destroyed, when their bodies or estates are. Their afflictions are medicinal, and heal while they kill. We must not wrap up the dispensation of God to different persons in the same apprehensions; though his act be the same to both, yet his meaning is not. How the afflictions of the wicked and righteous differ, the Reader shall find more distinctly opened, Chap. 5. 17.

Job goes on to confirm his opinion by a further argument, in the 23d verse. For if any should deny his minor proposition, that the Lord destroyes the righteous and the wicked, he proves it thus. *If the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent,* that is, he carries himself (so far as the eye can judge) toward the innocent in their tryals, as he doth toward the wickedest under greatest judgements, *He laugheth at the one, and he laugheth at the other,* which words are at once a confirmation and an aggravation of what he spake before.

Pœna satisfactoria et medicinalis.

Verse 23. *If the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent.*

Nullum est ver-
bum hac senten-
tia et illa,
elegit anima
mea suspendi-
um, durum atq;
asperius in hoc
libro. Philip.

The former words gave offence to some mindes, conceiving them inconsistent with grace and holiness. Others are more offended with these. And in the letter it is strange language to say, *The Lord laughs at the tryall of the innocent.* This verse, with the fifteenth of the 7th Chapter, *So that my soul chooseth strangling,* are concluded by a learned Writer, the sharpest and most questionable passages in the whole book. Hence his conceit, that in the 40th Chapter, vers. 5. *Job* aims at these two speeches, *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer; that is, I will never speak such a word again, that, I chuse strangling; yea twice, but I will proceed no further; I said also, That thou laughest at the triall of the innocent,* but I will never say so any more, I am ashamed that ever I opened my lips so unadvisedly; it is too much that I have spoken twice so sinfully, I will not speak so thrice. The conceit is witty, but the charge lies too heavy. The sense of the former hath been made out fair for *Job*, and I doubt not but his meaning may be so cleared in this latter, that he will need neither reproof nor apology for saying,

If the scourge slay suddenly, &c.

Flagellum à
circumcundans
vel circumdan-
do dicitur, quod
videatur cir-
cumcingere
hominem.

The verb signifies to encompass or incircle a thing, to twine round about it. And so it alludes to the fashion of a scourge, which begirts the offender, and at every blow winds about his body.

The scourge in Scripture is put for any affliction: plague, sword or famine are called scourges, *Isa. 10. 26. The Lord of hosts shall stir up a scourge for him; what scourge! the next words expound it, a scourge, not of cords or wiers, but of swords and spears, a scourge, according to the slaughter of Midian at the rock Orab, that is, the Lord will send a sword upon him: So Gideon slew the Midianites, Judg. 7. commanding his souldiers to make that terrible shout when they fell on upon their Camp, The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon.* That great warrior *Attila*, King of the *Hunnes*, who harassed a great part of Christendom with fire and sword, was called, *Flagellum Dei*, The scourge of God. The unbelieving *Jews* having made a Covenant with death, and an agreement with hell, were very full of faith, such as it was (*Isa. 28. 15.*) *When the over-flowing scourge shall pass thorow, it shall not come unto us.* An over-flowing scourge ('Tis an elegant metaphor taken

Flagellum in-
undans, i. e.
omnes sine de-
leat involvens
et proculcans.

taken from waters) is a common, spreading, sweeping judgement, which like an over-flowing river encompasses, circles about, and fetches in all.

Slay suddenly.

Every scourge doth not slay, and many which slay do not slay suddenly. We usually hear the clashing of the scourge before we feel the smart of it. The Lord shews the scourge and threatens it before he smites with it, he lets judgement hang like a black cloud over the heads of some, long before it falls upon them. But others *He slayes suddenly.*

Subito, statim,
ita ut non sen-
tiantur donec
res fiat.

Some take this suddenness of the scourge in slaying for a mitigation of the judgement, and others for the heightning of it. In the former sense suddenness doth not imply the sudden coming of it, but the sudden killing of it, a scourge which doth its work quickly; so that a man doth not hang long as it were upon the rack of an affliction. The Church of the Jews (*Lam. 4. 6.*) complains of their afflictions, as if the judgement of *Sodome* and *Gomorrhah* had been more easie and eligible then that which the Lord brought upon *Jerusalem*; not that they thought God had dealt worse with them then with *Sodome* and *Gomorrhah*, but as to this particular, because *Sodome* was overthrown in a moment, but *Jerusalem* was pined away by degrees with famine. *A sudden scourge is a kind of mercy.* Better dye once then die alwayes: Or, as the Apostle speaks concerning the afflictions of the Saints (*Rom. 8. 36.*) *To be killed all the day long.* When one under torture petitioned *Tiberius* the Roman Emperour, a bloody cruel tyrant, that he might be quickly dispatht, he desired not life or pardon, but a speedy death; the Emperour sent him word, *That as yet, he was not reconciled to him, or become his friend.* His cruelty would neither suffer the man to live longer, nor to dye speedily. And some observe, that as the Prophet expresses his trouble at the prosperity of the wicked in their lives, so at this kind of prosperity in their deaths, *There are no bands in their death, but they are lusty and strong,* (*Psal. 73. 4.*) that is, when they dye, in their strength, they are not pined away with long and tedious sicknesses: *They live in pleasure, and dye with ease.* They are not bound to their beds, and tyed down with the cords of chronical lingering diseases. It is some favour (if the scourge must slay) to be slain, in this sense, *suddenly.*

Nondum recum
ingratiam re-
diij.

Non sunt nodi
in morte eorum.

But here the scourge flaying suddenly, is a judgement coming unexpectedly, *They who sleep in security, seldome dream of scourges.* Observe hence,

God can send death and affliction in a moment.

When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travel upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape (1 Theff. 5. 3.) Wicked men are never so near destruction, as when they are most secure. And that (by the way) is the reason why we have least cause to fear those men, who fear God least: Security springs from infidelity, and both from sleighting, if not contemning the Word of God; no marvel then if the Lord hasten his wrath to justifie his truth, and slay them on a sudden who would not believe, no not at leisure. But to the point. The Prophet describes it elegantly. (Isa. 30. 13.) *This iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall; that is, this iniquity shall produce a judgement, which shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in an high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.* If once a high built wall do but swell, down it comes. Such a swelling wall fell upon, and slew twenty and seven thousand of Benhadads scattered Army (1 Kings 20. 30.) *And such a tower in Silo fell upon eighteen and slew them* (Luk. 13. 4.) The Prophet Jeremy at once imprecates and fore-tells a speedy scourge upon the gain-saying Jews, *Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them,* Jer. 18. 22. This hath been the case of many among us, who thinking of no danger have been surprized by a troop, themselves made prisoners, and their houses spoyld in one hour. Such was the condition of our Brethren in Ireland; it is almost incredible how suddenly that scourge slew them: there was scarce a Protestant that had so much as a suspicion of the danger; nay, some would not believe it, when a great part of the country was on a flame, and the enemy had butchered thousands. That scourge (if ever any) slew both the perfect and the wicked. As mercies may come so suddenly to our senses, that they overcome our faith, so may judgements. Some have been surprized with mercy (Psal. 126. 4.) *When the Lord turned our captivity as the streams in the South: that is, gave us sudden deliverance* (Rivers in the South rise not from a constant spring, but from accidental raines, which make violent land-floods on a sudden.) At the approach of this sudden mercy, the Jews were like to them that dream. So when the Lord sends sudden judgements, rivers of

of calamity, rivers of blood, as rivers in the South, when he brings in captivity, as rivers in the South, then are we in a dream too, and are not only destroyed, but distracted and amazed. But how fast soever judgements come, they come not suddenly upon them who are awake, much less on them who are watching for them when they come.

If the scourge slay suddenly; what then?

He will laugh at the tryal of the innocent.

M. Broughton reads it thus, *He scorneth at the melting away of the innocent.* The reason of the different reading is, because the Hebrew word may spring either from a root, signifying to tempt and try, or from another, *To melt and dissolve: He scorneth at the melting away of the innocent.* Afflictions are meltings, they dissolve our comforts; yea, our very hearts, in the same sense that godly sorrow breaks our hearts. *Pity should be shewed to him that is melted* (Chap. 6.) *but ye forsake the fear of the Almighty; so M. Broughton translates there, The Lord tempted Abraham* (Gen. 22. 1.) that is, the Lord tried his faith, to find out of what strength it was, and how much he could trust him in that great business of sacrificing his son.

He will laugh at the tryal of the innocent] at their melting or trying by afflictions. The difficulty is, How God laughs at this tryall? The word notes derision or scorn (Psal. 2. 4.) *He that sitteth in heaven will laugh*, there he uses the ordinary word for laughter, *and he will have them in derision.* That's the word in the text. So that properly and strictly it signifies to scorn and deride, and that either by words or gestures, as putting forth of the finger, shaking the head, or gnashing the teeth, which are Scripture expressions of highest scorn by gesture.

But how shall we fit this to the business in hand? Will the Lord thus scorn and deride at the trial and probation of the innocent?

The Vulgar was it seems so much straitned to make out the sense, that he reads it negatively, *If the scourge slay suddenly, he will not laugh at the tryal of the innocent.* Others, though they put not in a negation formally and in terms, yet they do it equivalently, and therefore they render it by an interrogation, *If the scourge slay suddenly, will he laugh at the tryal of the innocent?* No, he will not, that's their meaning: the Lord will not sleight or neglect the tryal of the innocent, though he destroyes them, yet he will not deride

למכה

Vel à radice

דמם

dissolvit. Vel à

נכה

tentavit.

לעל

Ridere est irridere, subsonnare, ut fit ab hostibus, cum eos quos captivos detinent, diuturnis malis conficiunt. Pined.

Significat derisionem quæ fit externo corporis gestu.

L X X. vertunt per מוֹכֵחַ in 1 Cor. 14. 21.

them. But we, and most of the learned Hebritians, keep close to the affirmative, *If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the tryall of the innocent.*

Suppositum
verbi videndi
demon est, qui
gaudet videns
homines diu-
turnis malis
cruciari. Cajet.

There is a dispute, *whom* we are to understand by this *He*, for some taking this laughing and deriding in the broadest sense, think it too low and dishonourable to be ascribed unto God, and therefore they carry it down low enough, ascribing it to the devil; *if the scourge slay suddenly, then the devil laugheth to see the upright tryed*, he makes merry with the sorrows of the Saints: the devil hath no great cause (how much mind soever he hath) to laugh, considering his condition; but the meaning is, that which gives the devil most content, is to see the righteous persons vexed. And that's a truth *As there is joy in heaven, when good men sorrow for sin; so there is joy in hell, when good men are enwrapt with the sorrows of suffering.*

Impius justum
subjunct malis
implicitum.

Others make the antecedent to *He*, a wicked man (such are within one degree of Satan his children) *If the scourge slay suddenly, then, the ungodly, who yet thrive and prosper, rejoyce and make sport at the tryall of the innocent; See what these good, honest, innocent men have got, they thought by their prayers and fastings, by their zeal and striciness to exempt themselves from these common afflictions, they presumed they should be spared, though all the world were consumed, but see they are destroyed as well as others, they smart under the lash as well as we their neighbours, whom they looked upon, as the only whipping stocks, when a scourge should come. That wicked men laugh and deride the innocent under affliction, and jeer them with, Where is your God now? what's become of all your praying and fasting? Where are the hopes and confidence, the priviledges and protections ye talked of? is a truth.*

But thirdly, We need not ease the text thus, nor releive it out of this difficulty, by fastning the interpretation upon wicked men. Let us take the relative to be God himself, and see how we can make the sense out, *with a saving to his honour. If the scourge slay suddenly, He, that is, the most holy and gracious God, laugheth at the tryall of the innocent.* How so?

First, I premise this, God doth not laugh or deride properly at the afflictions of his people. No, the Lord is a tender, a gracious and a merciful father to his people at all times, and most tender of them, when they are in their afflictions, when they are in their soreness, and in their sorrows: he is more tender then the most tender-

tender-hearted mother (*Isa. 49. 15.*) *Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* Will a mother laugh and deride a poor infant, when it lies sprawling and wants her help? No, much less will God laugh at his people: therefore as laughing noteth hard-heartedness, or unnatural harshness of spirit, the Lord doth not laugh at his afflicted Saints, it is against his nature, against his practice and all experience.

What is it then he laughs at?

First, Positively, thus, *Job* would hear express that the Lord carries himself in outward things, with an equal hand both to the good and bad, as was touched before. The Lord laugheth at and derideth the wicked (*Prov. 1. 28.*) *I will laugh at their destruction, and mock when their fear cometh.* The carriage of God, to his own people is such, as if he did mock and laugh at them also. He that laugheth and derideth at a mans affliction, doth not regard what he suffers, he gives him no help nor delivers him out of his sufferings. Nay, a man that laugheth at another in affliction, will lay more affliction upon him. Even thus in regard of outward dispensations, God deals with his own people, that is, when innocent ones are in affliction and cry unto him, he makes as if he did not hear or regard them, but lets them lye crying it may be day after day in their pains and wants, yea sometimes instead of easing them, he layes more afflictions upon them; poor souls, since they sought the Lord they find an increase of their sorrows. God seems to deal with them, as *Pharaoh* did with the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, who crying to him for release of their burdens, are answered only with, *Ye are idle, ye are idle; let more work be laid upon these men.* *Exod. 5.* Or like *Rehoboam*, who threatned his people to make their yoke heavier, while they petitioned he would make it lighter, and told them of scorpions, while they complained of whips. *David* gives us this in his own experience (*Psal. 77. 2, 3.*) *In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord, my sore ran in the night, and ceased not, (or, my hand was stretched out in prayer, and bedewed with tears) my soul refused to be comforted (David sought for comfort, but his troubles encreasing, he could not take in the comforts administered) I remembered God, and was troubled, I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed.* If any thing in the world can ease a troubled heart, thoughts of God can. Thus *David* once relieved himself, *When the people talked of stoning him, he encouraged him-*

Dicitur ridere, quia sic judicant hominum vulgus.

Ridere dicitur, cum contemneretur orationem postulantis opem.

self

*Post orationes
meas, ita me
semper in mis-
eria reliquit, ac
sine derideret.*

self in the Lord his God (1 Sam. 30. 6.) Yet sometimes God seems to think of us least, when we think of him most. A soul complaining may be over-whelmed, instead of being helped. Now, he that layes on further afflictions, slights and laughs at the former. And this is the first way, in which it may be made out, how God laughs at the tryall of the innocent. When they complain, he doth not presently relive them, nay, he layes heavier burdens of affliction upon them, and makes them more matter of complaining, before they have any matter of rejoycing.

*Deus ex viro-
rum fortium, sc.
piorum con-
flictu non le-
vem capit vo-
luptatem.*

Secondly thus, The Lord is said to laugh in regard of the pleasure He takes in the fruits, effects and issues of those troubles, wherewith his people are exercised: *He laugheth*, not at the affliction it self, but at the effects and success of it: he knows the issue will be matter of high contentment to himself, and benefit to the Saints. He laughs at their tryal, because he knows they will honour him in their tryals. He laughs not because they are pained, but because himself is glorified. As a father who puts a child upon a very hard task, which yet he is assured the child is able to go thorow with, takes content to see him sweat at it, to pant and blow at it: Or, as a Commander in war, rejoyces when he puts a party, of whose valour and skill he is confident, upon some dangerous service: though he knows many of them must bleed for it, and some of them (perhaps) dye for it, yet it pleases him to see such engaged in it. Thus God laughs at the tryals and most desperate adventures of the innocent, for he sees they are men who will bide a tryal, they will *neither shrink in the wetting, nor will their spirits consume in the burning.*

And thus a believer is exhorted to laugh at his own tryal, *My brethren* (saith the Apostle James, Ch. 1. 2.) *count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations or tryals.* The more tryals, the more joyes. And thus one beleiver may laugh and rejoyce at the tryal of another, because he knows *that the tryal of our faith, being much more precious then of Gold that perisheth, though it be tryed with fire, shall be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ,* 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.

Hence observe,

First, *The Lord may bear himself toward his own people in their affliction, as if he mockt at their afflictions.*

As he laughs at wicked men in earnest, and hath them in derision: so he puts out an appearance of derision in what he doth to his own people.

Second-

Secondly, *To see good men tryed is a delight unto God.*

Laughter is an expression of our inward content and joy. Though the word of the text is scarce used for laughter in a good sense, yet here it may. The Prophecie saith of Christ (Isa. 53. 10.) *It pleased the Lord to bruise him; God the father was delighted to bruise his Son, not that he delighted in afflicting or striking him, he was tender and dear to him, as the apple of his eye. But with respect to the issue and fruit of it, the Lord was pleased; His father laughed to see him cast down and suffering, whom he fore-saw conquering and triumphing: So it is here. A man delights to see wrestlers shew their strength, as also to behold men striving for masteries in fencing or running a race, which are but tryals of activity, and contendings for honours. Thus when the Lord bringeth his innocent servants into affliction he doth but bring them to a wrestling, to a running or a fencing, to see how they can make use of their hands and legs, how they can make use of their spiritual armour, how they can weild the sword of the Spirit, how they can defend themselves with the shield of faith, how they can bear a knock upon the helmet of salvation, how they can walk upon thorns and sharp stones, himself having before shod their feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. This is the spectacle which God delighteth in and laughs at, and it is a glorious spectacle. The Roman triumphs were but childish playes to these of the Saints, called out and clad with the armour of righteousness, which makes them more then Conquerours, over tribulations and distress, over persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and the sword, yea over principalities and powers, over things present and to come; the Saints in their tryal conquer not only all present evils, but all that are possible. They are real victours over those evils, which they shall never feel or see. As in doing, so in suffering, all is reckoned to us, which we are willing to engage in, though actually we do not; no marvel if God laugh at the tryall of such Champions and Christian Hero's. It is the observation of Seneca, a Roman Moralist and Philosopher, in his book of providence, speaking of some of the Ancient worthies of Rome, I see not (saith he) what Jupiter hath on earth more contentful to him, or to which he would rather turn his eye, then to behold Cato standing firm in the midst of publick ruines, & that though after all his wrestlings as a noble Patriot for the saving of his Country) he found both his honest counsels broken, and his unwearied labours lost yet*

*Non vides quid
habeat in terris
Jupiter pul-
chrius: si con-
vertere ani-
mum velit,
quam ut spectet
catonem, jam
pivitibus non
semel fractis,
stantem nihilo
minus inter
ruinas publicas
rectum. Senec.
12. de. provid
be*

he did not lose his Spirit, nor was his heart broken. Now, if an Heathen could say, that to see such a man contest with all manner of troubles, was, he thought, a delight for *Jupiter*, and laughter to the idol-gods: May not we changing the persons make his sense the comment of this text, and a proof of this observation? It is a holy delight to the holy God to see his faithfull ones, his *Abrahams* in a tryal, to see his *Jobs* in a tryal, his *Pauls* in a tryal, to see those *Grandees in graces* shew such admirable skill, such courage, such zeal, such faith, such patience, such submission of spirit, to see Saints play the men thus in such spirituall tryals and hottest services, is not this just matter of laughing and rejoycing to the Lord?

And if the Lord take a kind of pleasure in the tryals of his Saints, then surely the Saints ought not to be displeased at their tryals. Hence the Holy Ghost bids the Saints laugh, as well as the Lord laugheth, *Jam. 1. 2. My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.* Christians, never look upon a tryal with such sad and fowr faces; the face of God is full of smiles to see you at it: shall that make you sad, which makes God rejoyce? *Never grieve but when ye fear ye have grieved God.*

Further, note, *That the afflictions of the Saints are tryals of the Saints.*

They are occasions to shew forth their vertues and their graces; They give proofs both to God and the world, what manner of men they are. Tried ones are precious ones; many others are so, but these appear what they are, they have shewed their mettall. All true faith is good, but tryed faith is best (*1 Pet. 1. 7.*) *That the tryal of your faith (that is, that your tryed faith) being much more precious then of gold that perisheth, may be found unto praise, &c.*

Besides these two interpretations, I shall add, for a close, two more, which may further illustrate the meaning of this laughter ascribed to God, at the tryal of the innocent. First, or

Thirdly, He laughs at the fears and sad fore-casts of his people, who not being able to look thorow second causes, and see the ends of things in their beginnings, presently judge all's lost, the Church must be ruin'd, and the Saints undone, because thus tryed. Now God knowing the end of all actions, not only at *their beginning*, but *from the beginning* (yea, from eternity) he looking thorow the blackest clouds and darkest nights upon the issues of all things derides, the simple conjectures of men about them. The very Heathens have given us such a notion of God in laughter. Secondly, or

Fourthly,

*Prudens futuri
temporis exitum
aligrosa nocte premit
Dum. Ridetq;
si mortalis ultra
Fas trepidat, &c. Horat.
l. 3. Car. Od.
29.*

Fourthly, God laughs at the laughter, and derides the joyes of wicked men, who see his innocent ones tryed. For they say in their hearts, and it may be with their tongues, *Happy we, who have escaped such a scouring, we would not have been in their coats for a world: better die then live to bring our selves into such troubles.* Or, thus, *Now the day is ours, we have prevailed, these men are catcht and entangled, we shall do well enough with them now.* The Lord hearing such language at the tryal of the innocent, laughs, to think how those wretches shall see themselves deceived, when they see these who were fallen risen again, or God by their fall raising others, and setting his King upon his holy hill of Sion.

Lastly, As God laughs at the tryal of the innocent; so let the nocent and impenitent remember and tremble at it, that God will laugh at the approach of their torments, and mock when their fear cometh, when their fear cometh as a desolation, and their destruction as a whirlwind.

Job having thus shewed how the innocent are afflicted, shews in the next verse how the wicked are exalted, and from both he infers, that there can be no judgement made of any mans inward state, whether he be *innocent or wicked*, upon his outward state, whether he be *prosperous or afflicted*: The innocent are under the scourge, and the wicked are upon the throne, and who doth these things, but God himself? that's the sum of this 24th verse.

Verse 24. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where and who is he?*

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.

The earth.] Earth may be taken strictly for the element of earth, as it is opposed to fire, water, and air. Not so in this place; but more largely, *earth* is put for all earthly things, as Ps. 115. 6. *The heaven of heavens is the Lords, but the earth hath he given unto the children of men,* that is, he hath divided all earthly comforts as a portion or inheritance among men: their lot falleth there.

Thirdly, Earth is put for the inhabitants or people of the earth, Psal. 100. 1. *Praise him all ye earth;* so the Hebrew which we translate, *Praise him all ye people of the earth.* Isa. 24. 4. *The earth mourneth and fadeth away;* that is, they who dwell on the earth.

Fourthly, By the earth we may understand special Countries or Nations, tracts or parts of the earth.

T t

Fifthly

Fifthly, The earth is put for earthly minded men, and for the false Church, Revel. 14. 3. The Saints are redeemed from the earth; that is, God hath fetcht them out from amongst false worshippers and impure ones, he hath rescued them from the world of Idolaters, and from the superstitious multitude.

In this place *earth* is to be understood in the second, third, or fourth notion, namely, for all earthly comforts; or for the Provinces and Kingdoms of the earth; or for the inhabitants and people of the earth. *These are given into the hand of the wicked.*

Given.] The Lord makes (as it were) a deed of gift of these things unto wicked men. So in the 15th of this book, v. 19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them;* which some expound of the righteous, *No stranger passed among them;* that is, none came to invade them: Or, as others render it, *No strange thing,* that is, no unjust thing came in amongst them, they had the earth in their own power and rightful possession.

*Nihil alienum,
sc. injustum.
Jun.*

To be given, noteth two things; or there is a double act of given.

There is a gift by providence, and a gift by promise. When the Lord is said to give the earth into the hand of the wicked, we are to understand it of that common providentiall gift whereby he disposeth of all things to all men; no man hath any thing but by the gift of God. Thus wicked *Jereboam* had the Kingdome of *Israel* given him, and so had hypocriticall *Jehu* for four generations, *They served the providence of God, and the providence of God exalted them.* (Act. 17. 26.) *He hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the time before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;* that is, he hath (as it were) chalked out, and drawn a line where the bounds and habitations, whither the dominions and possessions of such men shall be extended, and where they shall be confined. That's a gift of providence.

There is a special gift of promise peculiar to beleivers (Ro. 8. 32.) *He that spared not his own Son, but gave him to die for us, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* that is, all worldly things; or we may take in whatsoever else concerns our spiritual estate, besides Christ: all the things of Christ, yea & all worldly things come in to the Saints, as a gift by Christ, who is himself the greatest gift that ever man received, or that God could bestow. How shall he deny

deny us any thing, when he hath given us him who is above things?
 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or the world, all is yours, (for) ye are Christs.* Believers enjoy earthly things by an heavenly title. Christ is their conveyance. In this sense the earth is not given to the wicked: The Lord gives them nothing in Christ, or for Christ, as a Saviour in the Covenant of grace, *Christ as a Lord hath bought the wicked* (2 Pet. 2. 1.) and he gives them what they have, as they are his creatures: as he hath given them a subsistence, and a breathing in the world, so he allots them maintenance in the world.

So then, to receive by donation from God, may note any way of possession. What wicked men inherit by succession and descent from their ancestours, is a gift of God.

Yea, what they get and hold by violence and oppression, is a gift of God. The earth which wicked men tear out of the hands of the godly; the earth which they stain with the blood of lawfull owners, that they may enjoy it; even this is said to be given unto them by God, in that common way of providence. *Nebuchadnezzar* was a cruel oppressour, yet he had the earth given him by God, *Jer. 27. 6. Now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babilon my servant, and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.* God gave the land, yet *Nebuchadnezzar* invaded it, and got it by violence. God sent him (*Isa. 10. 6.*) but he went of his own errand, *vers. 7.* He had no thought of serving the will and commands of God, but of serving his own ambition and covetousness: yet of this cruel oppressour the Lord saith, *I have given him all these lands, &c.* Thus, *The earth is given,*

Into the hand of the wicked.

There is a question, whom we are to understand by these *Donees*, or the receivers of this gift? some expound the text (with a speciality of the devil) *the earth is given into the hand of that wicked one,* who is, as, *the Prince of the air*, so, *the Prince of this world*, and hath great power upon the earth. But take it of wicked men who are the servants and heirs of Satan; as the Saints are the heirs of Christ, and receive all things from him, so wicked men are the heirs of Satan, his children, and what they receive as a common gift from God, they receive by a special gift from Satan. The devil boasted to Christ (*Mat. 4.*) *All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall*
 T t 2 down

down and worship me. Though the devil be a very beggar, and hath not a shoe-latchet of his own to give, yet for such services and homages he gives out large possessions of the World (common providence so ordering it) to wicked men, his vassals.

*Si flagellatur
innocens quid
mirum cum
mundi iudices
corruptissimi
sint?*

*Terræ potestas
permissa est
impiissimo de-
moni, qui dici-
tur mundi re-
xor, ille effi-
cit, ut reges,
principes, ju-
dices, quasi ob-
velatos habe-
rent oculos
cæcæ et sine
discrimine de
rebus judican-
tes. Engub.*

Hence these words are interpreted, as a reason of that confusion before spoken of. No wonder if innocent men are under the scourge, for *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked.* When they have most power, who have least honesty, things must needs be turned up-side-down, and all put into disorder. What can be expected from such a tyrannous Prince as Satan, from such wicked instruments as rule under him, but continual disturbance amongst the children of men: especially that good men should go by the worst. Godly men are like to have but little peace, while these have the preeminence. The devil clouds the understandings, and veils the eyes of those Princes and Judges, whom he (in this sense) advances: *And justice is equally wounded and distorted, when Judges cannot see Things, as when they see Persons in judgement.* The bounty of God to the wicked, is an occasion of their injury to the righteous.

But rather take the words (which was hinted before) as an argument, whereby Job further proves, that there can be no ground of judgement upon any mans spiritual estate by the appearances of his temporal; for as righteous and innocent persons are under the scourge, and laid low in the world, so wicked men have the earth given them, and are exalted.

I find some reading the text as an expostulation, *Wherefore is the earth given into the hand of the wicked? wherefore doth he cover the faces of the Judges?* As if Job did chide with God about this unequal carriage of things in the world, and called him to give a reason of it. But we have found Job (in others places) acquitting himself from the suspicions of such a charge, and therefore I cannot joyn with these in laying it upon him here.

Job doth not complain, but affirm, *That the earth is given into the hands of the wicked.* Whence observe.

First, *Wicked men may abound in earthly things.*

They may have the earth and the fulness of it; the earth, and all that is earthly; their bellies are filled by God himself with *hidden treasure* (Psalm 17. 14.) Precious things are usually hidden, and all that's named treasure (though it be but earthly) hath a preciousness

ousness in it. Hidden treasures of the earth fill their bellies who sleight the treasures of heaven, and whose souls shall never have so much as a taste of heavenly treasures: riches and honour are the lot of their inheritance, who have no inheritance among those *Whose lot is glory. They have the earth in their hands*, who have nothing of heaven in their hearts: they bear sway in the world, who are slaves to the world: they govern and order others at their will, who are led captive by Satan at his will. Be not offended and troubled to see the Reins of government in their hands, who know not how to govern themselves; or to see them rule the world who are unworthy to live in the world. Remember, *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked*. We must submit to the judgement of God, though it leaves us under the injustice of men. And we have little reason to envy them a great portion in this life, who have all their portion in this life.

The most wise God, who hath all things to dispose, disposes them with infinite wisdom: he gives good things to those that are evil, but he gives better things to those who are good. He hath a *Benjamins messè*, a rich portion for his own children, after all these disbursements to the children of disobedience. Their portion lies not in earth and dust, or in the rubbish of the world: *Heaven is given into the hand of the Saints: Spiritual blessings in heavenly things are given into the hands of the Saints*: The pardon of sin, the love and favour of God, the blood of Jesus Christ, peace of conscience, joy in the holy Ghost, are gifts worth the having, these are *given into the hand of the Saints*. As for the earth, *He giveth that into the hand of the wicked*, and yet all that is not given into their hands. Wicked men have not all the earth, and some wicked men have none of the earth. The Lord often makes the portion of his own people fat and plenteous, and the portion of his enemies lean and poor. *Heaven hath not all the earthly-poor, nor hath all the earthly-rich*. God doth not give wicked men all the earth; but all the earth which they have is of his giving. Most of the earth is given to be their possession; and all the possession which is given them, is of earth; therefore it is said, *He giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked*.

And seeing, *God giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked*, we may observe also,

That wicked men have a just title to the earthly things which they enjoy.

They

They are not *meer usurpers*, neither shall they be dealt with as *meer usurpers*. They have no spiritual title, no title by Christ, they claim not by promise, which the Saints doe. They have forfeited their title by sin, all is lapsed and escheated into the hand of the great land-Lord. Their goods are forfeited, and so are their lives into the hand of God, and he gives both back for a while into their hands. He gives them their lives back, and reprieveth them; for which time of their reprieve, he giveth them the earth to live upon, or to maintain their lives: and so far as they use earthly things for the continuance of life, they shall not be accounted or reckoned with as usurpers. They shall not be charged for using the creature, but for abusing it, for making the earth serve their lusts, not for making it a support of their lives. And seeing as the Lord hath given them back their forfeited lives, so also their forfeited lands by a deed of gift, sealed with general providence, this is enough to secure them in those worldly possessions (which they have neither got nor hold by injustice) from the brand of usurpation, and from the violence of dispossession. *As what God hath joyned no man may put asunder; So what God hath given, no man must take away. Neither riches nor rule are founded in grace. He hath given the earth into the hand of the wicked.*

*Dominium non
fundatur in
gratia.*

He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.

He covereth] There is some question *whom* we are to understand, as the antecedent to this relative. *He, who is, he that covereth?* Some make the antecedent, a wicked man. Others say, 'tis God. *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, and he, that is, the wicked one covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* Or, *He, that is, God covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* I shall a little open this expression, it needeth some uncovering, for it is dark in both relations.

*Tegit ne vide-
ant quod equi
et justum
est. Drus.*

First, Look upon that interpretation, which refers it to wicked men. *He covereth*, namely, *That wicked man*, who is preferred and exalted, *covereth the faces of the Judges*; that is, he stops the course of justice. And there are four wayes by which wicked men cover the faces of the Judges.

*Manera cecos
reddunt judi-
ces.*

First, By gifts and rewards. Bribes vail, yea put out the eyes of a Judge, that he cannot see to give every one his due. Hence that charge (Exod. 23. 8.) *thou shalt take no gift; for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.*

Secondly,

Secondly, The faces of the Judges are covered by threatnings; fear of loss blindes as well as hope of gain. Some send terrible messages to the judge; will not you do as we would have you? Will not you give your sentence and opinion thus? at your peril be it. Now the Judges face is covered, his eyes are put out by a threat; the mist and cloud of a Princes displeasure, of a great mans indignation is before his eyes, *His face is covered.*

Thirdly, the Judges faces are covered by actuall putting them to shame, by casting them out of favour, and clouding them with disgrace, by taking away their commissions, or sending them a *Quietus est*, laying them by as unfit for service; any of these is, a covering to the Judges face.

There is a fourth way of covering the Judges face, to which the second and third are often made a preparatory. And that is, by putting the Judge to death. So much that expression implies in the 40th of this book of *Job*, v. 13. where the Lord with infinite wisdom and holiness, insulting over *Job* to humble him, bids him arise and do some great thing, somewhat which might speak him a man of might. *Deck thy self now with majesty and excellency, and array thy self with glory and beauty; cast abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud and abase him, look on every one that is proud, and bring him low, and tread down the wicked in their place, hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret; that is, cover their faces as men prepared for death, as men ready to go out to execution.* We may expound it by that (*Ester* 7. 8.) where as soon as ever the word went out of the Kings mouth, they covered *Hamans face*. And by that (*Mark* 14. 65.) where when Christ was judged worthy of death, the text saith, *They spit on him, and covered his face.* The covering of his face was a mark of a condemned man, held as unworthy to behold and enjoy the light of the Sun, or the light of the Princes countenance. Thus to cover the faces of the Judges is to condemn the Judges, and to take them out of the world by sufferings, rather then suffer them to do right. I find that of *Elibu* (*Job* 34. 29.) interpreted to this sense, *When he giveth quietness, who can make trouble?* That is, when the Lord doth absolve and acquit a man, giving him a discharge, then he is free, no man can sue him or trouble him, much less condemn him; but *if he hide his face, who then can behold him?* so we translate it, meaning thus, *If the Lord hide his own face.* But this exposition saith,

If

Quis rei faciem
poterit amplius
videre, quasi
absolutus sit.
Bold.
Illiſtor, colliga
manus, caput
obnubito, inſa-
lici arbori ſu-
ſpendito. Cic.
in orat. pro
Rabir.

ⲓⲟⲩⲉⲩⲱ
Judices vel of-
ficio, vel apti-
tudine.
Nomen judicis
apud Hebræos
latius patet
quam apud la-
tinos, non enim
ille tantum vo-
catur judex
qui controver-
tis vacat, ſed
etiam qui rem-
publicam armis
tuetur.
Bold.
Vidi ſervos, i.
e. ſervire dig-
nos et princi-
pes, i. e. dig-
nos imperio.

If the Lord hide the face of that man, that is, if the Lord condemn that man, or paſs ſentence of death upon him (of which covering or hiding the face was a ſymbol) then, *who can behold him?* That is, who then can ſee his face, or have ſociety with him, whom God hath ſeparated to death? It was a cuſtome alſo among the Romans, when ſentence was pronounced upon a malefactor, thus, to command the executioner, *Take him away, bind his hands, cover his face, hang him up.* And uſually with us, malefactours, who are ready to ſuffer the pains of death, put a covering upon their faces. This alſo may be a good ſenſe of the words, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, that is, a wicked Prince oppreſſeth and putteth the Judges to death. And whereas good Princes ſay, *Let Juſtice be done, though the world periſh*: he ſaith, *Let the Judges periſh, rather then juſtice ſhould be done.*

Yet further, the word *Judges*, in the original, notes not only ſuch as are in actual office to determine controverſies, whether criminal or civil; but any man that is worthy to be a Judge, or is fit to govern and manage publick affairs, whether in peace or war. And ſo it implies a ſuppreſſing and keeping down thoſe that are moſt able, and beſt qualified to undertake any ſervice for States and Kingdoms (Eccleſ. 10. 7.) *I have ſeen ſervants upon horſes, and Princes walking as ſervants upon the earth*; that is, I have ſeen men who are worthy no better employment then that of a ſervant, to rub horſe heels, or do the meanest offices, ſuch as theſe I have ſeen in the ſaddle, and in their trappings. And, *I have ſeen Princes walking upon the earth on foot*; that is, men who deſerve to bear rule and to govern Kingdoms, who both for ability and integrity, are worthy to have the Reins of authority in their hand, and to ſit at the helm, theſe I have ſeen walking upon the earth, or tugging at an oar, as common men: that's an evil which Solomon ſaw under the Sun: So here, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, may have this meaning, Evil Princes keep down and hold in obſcurity men of parts and gifts, of Spirit and courage, of honeſty and uprightness, and prefer only thoſe who are baſe and corrupt, who will ſerve turns, and comply with times.

Hence note, *That it is the policy of wicked Princes to corrupt and blind Judges, or to employ ſuch as are blind and corrupt.*

They take away power from thoſe who would uſe power well, and give power to them who are ſlaves to their wills.

Secondly,

Secondly, *It is the character of a wicked man to bribe the Judge, to put out the eyes, and cover the face of a Judge with gifts.* A good cause fears not the eye of the Judge, and a good man had rather lose his cause, then pervert the Judge.

So much of mans covering the faces of the Judges: now see how God covers them. He who opens the eyes and uncovers the faces of the Judges, that they may discern between cause and cause, doth also cover the faces of Judges, that they cannot discern between cause and cause. As the Lord hardens the heart and blindes the eye in spiritual things, so also in civil, not by taking away the sight which man had, but by with-drawing or denying his own light. The Lord covers the faces of the Judges, when he doth not give them light, nor shew them the path of justice. If God suspend his light, the greatest lights are presently in darkness. God doth not hood-wink or muffle up the Judges, by putting any thing before their eyes, but by hiding his own eyes from them. The Psalmist speaks of Judges thus covered (Psal. 82.5.) *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness, all the foundations of the earth are out of course.* We have here the character of evil Judges, and what the consequents of it are, *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness* (these three expressions explain the text) and what follows? *Then all the foundations of the earth are out of course*, Law and Justice are out of course, no man knoweth where to have right, or by whom to be protected against wrong.

Hence observe, *Ignorant and evil Judges are sent by God as a scourge. I gave them a King in mine anger,* Hos. 13. 11.

Lastly, (for the clearing of this) The covering of the faces of the Judges, notes three things.

First, Ignorance and blindness, or an inability to judge.

Secondly, Inhumanity and cruelty. *The faces of the Judges being covered, they will not look upon the case of a poor man.* It is usuall for an oppressed petitioner to say to the Judge, *Look upon me, good my Lord, cast an eye upon me*; the Judge who will not see, is covered with incompassion.

Thirdly, Covering of the face imports the affected partiality of Judges; many do as if they could not see, as if their faces were covered. Affection blindes the judgement, and none are so blind as they that will not see. The reason why the Heathen pictured their Fortune blinde, was because she disturbed things, as if she

Tegit, ne videant quod bonum & equum est.
Orus.

Hinc elicimus malos judices etiam a Deo esse. Orus.

Judex popularis. Simus esse debet.

Solebant judices intra cortinas se continere cum contrarium capitis sententiam pronuntiabant.
Pined.

Antiqui foru-
nam etiam
pingebant,
quod malis bo-
na, mala bonis
indiscrimina-
tim conferren-
tur.

affected blindedness, giving good to those that were evil, and evil to those that were good; when Judges give rewards to those that should be punished, and punish those that should be rewarded, their faces are covered, they are blind. Judges were anciently pourtraid or pictur'd, *without hands, and without eyes*; without hands, as noting that Judges must not receive or take gifts: And without eyes, because they must not see friend or neighbour, great or small, kinsmen or stranger; they were to distribute justice according unto every mans cause, and not with respect to any mans state or relation. It is said of Christ. (*Isa. 11.3.*) where his Kingdome is described, that he *shall not judge after the sight of his eyes*; that is, by what appears to the eye, *but he shall judge righteous judgement*. In this sense it is the Judges duty and honour to have his face covered. But the covering here meant, is either of ignorance and inability, or of corruptness and partiality. All which hinder the Judge from doing his duty, and are blemishes of his honour.

But some may object, Shall we attribute this to God? Doth he cover the faces of the Judges? God is pure from all sin, while he leaves men in their impurity. He is just in giving man over to his own injustice. So we answer, and the next words challenge all to make another answer.

If not, where, and who is he?

QXK7-OR

Si non, ubi ille?
Pagn.

Si non, ergo

Quis ille? lin-

gua sancta con-

cisa valde, Si

non (Supple,

Deus qui hoc

facit) ergo

quis est, supple,

qui facit.

If it is not the Lord who doth this, tell me who is it? as if he had said, Some may be offended and scandalized at my doctrine, that I assert, *The earth is given into the hands of the wicked*, that *he covereth the faces of the Judges*; if any man shall deny or scruple this, let him shew me whence these things are, and who is the cause of them?

There is a three-fold understanding of these words: Some make the antecedent to be *the wicked*; As if he had said, *Who but a wicked man will cover the faces of the Judges, and hinder the execution of justice?* And so they acquit God, accounting it blasphemy to attribute the act of covering unto him: The Lord is a God of justice, he loves judgement, he opens the mind, and clears the eye; he doth not cast clouds and mists before it. It's true so far as the act is sinfull, God forbid we should ascribe it unto God. But (as was shewed before) we need not use this *subterfuge*, lest we should lay any aspersion upon his justice and holiness.

ness. God can leave men to their injustice, without any thought in, or touch of injustice in himself.

Others interpret this Question as a challenge; *It is thus, If it be not, where, and who is he?* Who and where's the man that will argue or implead me of falshood in what I have asserted? Who is it that undertakes to convince me of error in the doctrine I have delivered? This is my opinion; these positions I have laid down for truth, *That the Lord destroyeth the perfect and the wicked, that he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent, that he gives the earth into the hand of the wicked, that he covereth the faces of the Judges;* If it be not thus, if any one hold otherwise, Let me see the man, Let him appear as my Antagonist, or Opponent. *Where, and who is he* that dares charge me with error? I am ready to answer him.

But rather take it in the sense before given, *If it be not the Lord who doth this, then shew me who it is, Where, and who is he?* There is an elegant conciseness in the Hebrew, which speaks only thus, *If not, where he?* or, *who he?* The sense is, *If it be not God who doth this, shew me, tell me, who is it?* And so the words are an exclusion of any other power, ordering and disposing the things of the world. When old Isaac was disappointed in his intention of giving the blessing to Esau, he trembled exceedingly, and spake in the language of the Text, *Who, where is he?* (Gen. 27. 33.) As if he had said, *I thought thou my Son Esau hadst brought me venison before and if it was not thou, I know not who it should be, I was never so deceived in my life, if it was not thou.* Such a broken speech Job uses here, *If it be not God who doth these things, I am much deceived, for I know not any in the world to whom I might probably assign them, but only unto him. You must be wiser than I, if you find any thus powerfull besides God. If not, where, and who is he?* Whence observe.

First, That, the greatest confusions in the world are ordered by God.

What greater confusion then this, to see the earth given to those who deserve not to live upon the earth? that they should rule the world who are unworthy to breathe in the world? Yet even these things are disposed by the Lord, and are the issues of his counsels, *That wherein we see no order receives order from the Lord.*

Secondly, Observe,

The very confusions that are in the world are an argument of the power of God.

For seeing the world continues in the midst of such confusions, it shews there is a mighty power, ballancing these confusions so exactly, that they cannot ruine the world. *If there were not an over-ruling power in God, wicked men ruling would soon ruine all. There are mysteries of providence, as well as of faith.* And many are as much puzzled to enterpret what God doth, as what he hath spoken. I find Heathens often stumbling at this stone, and ungodding their Idol gods at the sight of such distributions among men. When evil takes away good men, this is my next thought (saith one of them) *I am solicited to think there are no Gods.* Another observing how unequally men were buried, buries God in that observation. *Licinus* a cruel oppressor lies interred in a stately monument. *Cato*, a sober, grave, wise, and just Senator, hath a mean and poor Sepulchre, scarce looking above the ground. *Pompey the great*, that famous Commander and Conquerour had no tomb at all, he was buried no man knoweth where. *When we see (saith he) things go thus, who would think that there are any gods?*

*Cum rapiunt
mala facta bo-
nos, ignosce
falso,
Sollicitor nul-
los esse putare
Deos. Ovid.
Marmoreo Li-
cinius tumulo
jacet, et Cato
parvo.
Pompeius nul-
los quis putet
esse Deos?*

Thus they stumbled at the supposed uneven dispensations of their Idol gods. And we find great offence taken, and an horrible blasphemy belched out against the true God, upon the same occasion, and almost in the same terms (*Mal. 2. 17.*) *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, yet ye say, wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doth evil is good in the sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, or where is the God of judgement?* Though they fell not directly into the former blasphemy, to conclude there was no God, because wicked men prospered; yet they fell into a blasphemous opinion, that God delighted in, and loved wicked men because they prospered, *Wherein have we wearied the Lord?* Yes, ye have. Not that the Lord is at all moved or troubled in himself with the contumelious speeches of men; but thus, if any thing would tire, and weary him, this may, to hear himself arraigned and judged by the world, as a lover of evil men, because he doth not presently smite them with the visible marks of his displeasure; that because the earth is given into the hand of the wicked, therefore the Lord must needs be a friend to the wicked.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Observe, That,

No creature is master of his own wayes or ends.

The Lord giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked. Man cannot get the earth into his own hand, let him be as wicked as he will: *The Lord covers the faces of the Judges*: If he enlighten them, no man can cloud them, if he open, no man can shut.

No creature can do good without the directing and enabling hand of God.

No creature doth any evil without the supporting and overruling hand of God. (Isa. 41.23.) *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods, yea, doe good or evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.* Let us see you do any mischief, if ye can. Man is set upon mischief, but he cannot act mischief, unless God (at least) permit. *We were in an ill case, if man could do all the evil he hath a mind to.*

It is matter of comfort, to consider that the wayes and issues of good and evil, are in his hand, who is good, and doth no evil.

J O B Chap. 9. Vers. 25, 26.

Now my dayes are swifter then a post, they flee away, they see no good.

They are passed away as the swift ships, as the Eagle that hasteth to the prey.

THese two verses are a confirmation of *Jobs* former argument; as he had shewed in generall, that the wicked are exalted, and the innocent afflicted; so now he shews the latter branch from his own experience or example.

Vers. 25. *My dayes are swifter then a post, they flee away, they see no good, &c.*

We have here three similitudes, by which *Job* sets forth the uncertainty of his prosperous estate, and how soon the time wherein he enjoyed it was blown over,

1. The

1. } Post.

2. } The similitude of a Ship.

3. } Eagle.

As in the seventh Chapter he used three similitudes, viz.

1. } A weavers shuttle.

2. } of The winde.

3. } A dissolving cloud.

So here he bringeth in three more to clear the same point.

Job's thoughts travel'd thorow all parts of the world to find out illustrations of mans frailty. In these two verses three of the four elements are enquired into, The Earth, The Air, and the Water. A Post upon the Earth, A Ship upon the Water, an Eagle in the Air, are called in as witnesses to this truth.

Now my dayes are swifter then a Post, &c.

Now my dayes ;] That is, my prosperous dayes, so Mr. Broughton glosses. Troublesome times are all night and darkness: yet we may take it of dayes in generall, they are swifter then a Post.

לך

Levitas et velo itas, tam ex Græco quam Hebræo etiam Latino pro eodem accipiuntur.

Levis armatus & milites celeriter subveniunt.

כ

Cursor qui ex una urbe in alteram, &c. proficiscitur cum literis aut nunciis.

The word which we translate *swifter*, signifies any thing that is light, because light things are quick in motion. We call a man that is *swift of foot*, *light of foot*. And here it is joyned with that, which among men is most swift and passing, a *Post*, who rides or runs without any stop or stay, without the least considerable stop or stay: So that it is grown into a proverb: *To run post*, or, *To ride post*, is as much as to be in haste: To say, *You are in post-haste*, is to say, you are in great haste. *My dayes* (saith Job) *are swifter then a post*, they out-run those curreers sent out upon the most important messages. The post whether sent to carry news, good or bad, or intelligence for the dispatch of business, publick or private, is engaged to ride hard; he must not spare horse-flesh, or (as we commonly speak) *suffer the grass to grow under his horse-beels*. Hence observe,

First, *Time is very swift, 'tis gone suddenly.*

My dayes are swifter then a post. We seldome consider, or consider as we ought, this common truth. We live, for the most part, as if we could not tell how to get rid of our time; or, as if we were weary of our time, and knew not how to spend it out, as if time were rather chained to a *standing post*, then were like a *running*

ning post. The Ancients emblem'd Time with wings, as if it were not *running*, but *flying*.

The next word in the text comes near that sense, *They flee away.* My dayes (saith Job) *flee away.* The word doth not signifie flying, as a fowl with wings; but fleeing as a fugitive from hard bondage, or as a man from some imminent danger, which, because 'tis done with speed, therefore the word imports any speedy motion, especially that of a post. A post riding or running, is an excellent embleme of Time. There are many considerations in *post-riding*, which shews how exceeding speedy time must be, to which it is here compared.

First, A post rides upon fleet or speedy horses.

Secondly, He rides his horses upon their speed; a man may have speedy horses, and go softly, but a post spurs on.

Thirdly, A post hath change of horses at every stage, that he may keep them upon their speed.

Fourthly, He hath horses standing ready for change; they are not to fetch out of the field, or to make ready when he comes to his stage, it is but leaping into the saddle and away.

Fifthly, He that rides post, makes no long meals, much less feasts, he takes a bit and away.

Sixthly, He lies not long a bed, he scarce goes to bed till he comes to his wayes end.

Seventhly, A post hath extraordinary pay for his service, and that will cause him to make speed.

Eighthly, Sometimes he rides upon pain of death, with a halter about his neck. No man will loiter, when his life lyes on't.

Ninthly, If a man rides post, all must give him way, he picks and chooseth his path, and no man must hinder him.

Tenthly, he staves not to salute, much less like other travellers to gaze and view the Country, the Towns, buildings, Gardens, &c.

All these things laid together, evince, that the Post makes speed. Yet, saith Job, *My time out-runneth the post,* my time goes faster then he: The post may stay a little sometimes, but time will not stay at all: The post may stay for change of horses, but the chariot of the Sun never stayeth to change horses (the Sun is the measure of time) and that makes no stop, hath no stages or baiting places, *Our dayes are swifter then a post.*

Further, Experiences speak this most true of that speciall
time,

time, the time of prosperity. The best things of the world are in a moveable, in a passing, posting condition. They scarce abide with us long enough to learn what they are. If a man ride post, we can hardly discern who he is. The good things of the world, the pleasures and profits, the *form and fashion of it pass away* so fast, that none can perfectly report what they are, excepting this, *Transitory and vain*: As the artificial fashions of the world, the fashions in building and in apparell, pass so speedily, that few know what the fashion is, before 'tis gone; a new one is abroad, before the greatest number are in the old: So the natural fashions of worldly things, (some in themselves, all as to our enjoyment) the excellency and dignity, the lustre and beauty of the creature are out of sight, before we can well say of what colour and shape, or what manner of things they were. When the Painter takes the perfect feature of a mans face, or the lineaments of his body, he must sit. The world sits not so long with any man, as for him to take the picture of it. *Creatures perish in their using*; while they are in our hands we know not what they are, for even then they are perishing and declining from what they were. One said when a creature comfort was taken from him, if I had it again, methinks I could enjoy it; we seldom enjoy what we have. And what we have is alwayes *in transitu*, passing from us, while we have it; it is in motion, while in possession. We can scarce be acquainted with it, because it staves so little with us. Hence *Job* concludes this similitude.

They see no good.

My good dayes run so fast, that I cannot see the good of them.

Not to see good, is, not to have the least experience of good. For the eye takes in it's objects, and judges of them (so much Philosophers teach) sooner then any other sense. The eye is not long about it's business. It is the sense of quickest dispatch. So that it is, as if *Job* had said, the good things of this life are so transient, that I am so far from feeling or taking them, &c. that (which is done with the least delay, and expence of time) I have not time enough to see them. When men ride upon speed, or when any thing passes swiftly before us, we have but a glimpse, scarce a sight of those objects.

*Omnia mihi
præcepta sunt
præcepta sunt
præcepta sunt
præcepta sunt.* Bez.

Besides, *To see good* is to enjoy good, as was shewed, Chap. 7. verse 7. And when he saith, they (*scil.* his dayes) *saw no good*, his meaning

meaning is, that he saw no good in his dayes. Till there is a consistency or a fixedness of good, there cannot be a full enjoyment of good. The reason why in heaven we shall have so much happiness, is, because all the good in heaven is a fixed good. *Time passes, but eternity stands. Eternity is a fixed Now.* The things of heaven shall not perish in the using, nor shall the fashion of them pass away. In heaven vision will be everlasting, we shall ever see good, and that ever-seeing shall be an ever-enjoying of good. Here on earth we see God thorow a glasse darkly, and we see all good in such post-haste, passingly, that we rather see it not, then see it. Especially while we remember that good passes by us in the company, yea in a croud of evils, our sight of it (as when we are called to behold one man riding speedily among many) must needs be hindered. Yea oftentimes evils stand so thick about us, while good passes by us, that we cannot look thorow them to the good, which is before us. In heaven, as good stands to our eye, so it stands alone, there's no interposition of evil to eclipse the beauty, or darken the sight of it. There we shall see, and see nothing but good. Here we see much besides, yea we see either none at all, or very little good, and that but a little.

They flee away, they see no good.

From the Post, who runneth upon the Land, *Jobs* next comparison carries us to the motion of a Ship at sea, and anon to that swifter motion of an Eagle in the air.

Vers. 26. They are passed away as the swift ships, as the Eagle that hasteneth to the prey.

They are passed.

That is my dayes, are passed, and with them all the contents and comforts which I had in those dayes: we are to take dayes, as cloathed with all their contentfull occurrences and circumstances.

They are passed away.

Or, they are glided away insensibly.

As the swift ships.

Not only as the ships, but as the swift ships. A ship is a fabrick
X X for

כלפ

אני

Navis ab

אני

In Pibil, obve-
nire, occurrere
fecit; quæ sic
dicta est, quod
remigum aut
ventorum im-
petu impella-
tur et feratur.

for the sea, a house upon the sea, a moveable house; and as it moveth variably, so it moveth swiftly: The inconstancy of the windes makes the motion of the ship unconstant; and the strength of the windes makes the motion of the ship swift. So that to say, his dayes passed as a ship, is an aggravation of their sudden passage. A ship passeth without any stop from it self: The Ship needs not stay to bait, to sleep or rest, while it is upon its journey; whatsoever they doe who are within the ship, the ship moyes on, if they prepare it for motion.

Job puts an emphasis upon this comparison, his dayes were not only as a ship, but as a *swift ship*, there is much in that addition.

The Hebrew is, *My dayes are as the Ships of Ebeh*, which is diversly rendred.

Ebet, flumen
rapidissimum in
Arabia. Rab.
Sol.
Bold.

1. Some take the word *Ebeh* to be the name of a river in the Eastern part of the world, about *Arabia*, neer the place where *Job* lived. A late traveller hath observed a river of a very swift motion, neer *Damascus*, and not far from the Sepulchre of *Job*. Now a ship that moveth in a swift river, besides that it may have the winde, hath also a great addition to the speed of its motion from the force and strength of such a current. Thus, saith *Job*, my dayes move as the ships upon *Ebeh*, as ships upon the streams of that fierce, swift river, which go down with speed; as we see boats with the tide, and so proportionably greater vessels, where there is a river and a current proportionably to bear and carry them.

דֶּבֶר
Desideravit.
Navis volun-
taria, vel desi-
derij sc summo
desiderio ad
portem prope-
rantes.

Vir desideris-
sum.

2. Others conceive the word, not as a proper name, but as signifying *desire*, from *abab*, to desire with earnestness, and then the sense is rendred thus, *My dayes are passed away as ships of desire*; that is, as ships, which being laden with rich commodities, the Master and the Pilot desire earnestly to bring the ship speedily to her Port, that so they may put off their commodities, and make sale of the rich lading that is in her. The winde doth not so much fill the sails of such a ship, as desire doth the mindes of her marriners. Thus *Daniel* was called a man of desires, because he was a man so precious and desireable. A ship richly laden is much desired; such a ship is a great charge to the owners and merchants, they therefore send to speed the ship home, as fast as they can. (Thus saith *Job*) *My dayes pass as a ship that hath the most desired commodities.*

ε. The

3. The Chaldee and others, give a further note upon it, deriving the word from *Abah*, whence *Ebib*, which signifies a stalk growing up early from the earth, and bringing forth the first ripe fruit, of any kind; and so it is put for any early ripe Summer fruit for early plums, apples, cherries, &c. And then the sense is, *My dayes are like to a ship which carrieth early fruit*: So the Vulgar, *Like a ship carrying apples*.

Fruſus primivus.

Naves poma portantes. Vul.

Now a ship that carries such fruit makes great haſt, becauſe the fruit will ſpoyle and rot, if not ſpeedily put off. Ripe fruit is a commodity that will not keep; unleſs they have a quick paſſage, all is loſt. *My dayes* (ſaith *Job*) *paſſe even as a ſhip* that carries ripe Summer fruit, which are haſted away with all ſpeed, leſt they periſh before they come to the Port.

Petranteunt con navibus fruſus delicatior potantibus Targ.

4. There is another ſenſe given by thoſe, who derive the word from a root, which ſignifies, *to hate and oppoſe, or to be an adverſary*, and then it is thus rendred, *My dayes paſſ away as a Pirats ſhip*, or as a ſhip that goes out to take a prey, as a ſhip that goes out to take prizes upon the ſea. Now we know when ſhips go out either upon piracy, which is robbery at ſea, or upon any lawfull way of taking prizes by publick authority, theſe ſhips of all others are the ſwifteſt, they are prepared on purpoſe to make way and overtake other ſhips; their lading is not burden but ballaſt, that they may be ſwift of ſail; ſo ſaith *Job*, *My dayes paſſ away like a ſwift ſhip*; not like ſome great Merchant-ſhip deeply laden, which can make no great way in the ſea, but as a ſhip of piracy, that hath nothing in her but weapons, artillery and ammunition, to oppoſe thoſe they meet, ſuch as are your nimble Frygots, Fly-boats, and Catches, which ſail with every winde, or Galleys which paſſ without winde, carried with ſtrength of arms and oars, all being veſſels uſed to run in upon, and ſurprize a booty. This alſo is a good interpretation; and ſo M. Broughton tranſlates it, *My dayes do fleet away as the pirats ſhips*. That's the ſecond ſimilitude, *My dayes are paſſed away as the ſwift ſhips*.

אֵרֶב
In imitari, piratarum navet, quæ onorarie non ſunt, ſed tantum ad capiendam prædam.

And as an Eagle haſteneth to the prey.

This is the third ſimilitude. A ſhip moveth ſwiftly, eſpecially a ſhip upon a ſwift river; or a ſhip laden with deſireable commodities; or a ſhip laden with ſummer fruit; or a pirats ſhip, a man of war. But here is an inſtance implying greater ſpeed then that of the moſt ſpeedy ſhip, *As an Eagle haſteneth to the prey*.

An Eagle of all the fowls of the Air is the swiftest and strongest of wing: an Eagle is the chief of birds. We find in Scripture, swiftness expressed by this similitude of an Eagle (*Hab. 1. 8.*) the Chaldeans who invaded the people of Israel, are thus described, *Their horse-men shall come from far, they shall flee as the Eagle that hasteth to eat.* See the like instances, *Jer. 48. Jer. 49. Ezek. 17.* And in *Isa. 40. 31.* *They shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, &c.* noting the exceeding swiftness of the Saints in the wayes of God, the speed they shall make in wayes of holiness; though the youths faint, and the young men utterly fall, yet they that wait upon the Lord shall mount up with wings as Eagles, that is, they shall be swift and strong.

But here is more expressed then the natural swiftness of the Eagle, here is somewhat occasionall, which adds wings to her wings. We had four interpretations of the ships swiftness. Here is one expression exceeding all those four, *An Eagle hastening to the prey.*

Quoniam avidissime appetit, ideo perniissimè volat San.

An Eagle is a greedy fowl. Hence that of Christ (*Matth. 24.*) *Where the carcase is, thither the Eagles gather together;* that is, look where ever there is any prey, there you shall have Eagles: if there be a carcase to be had, the Eagle will be sure to make toward it, *My dayes (saith Job) are passed away, as the Eagle hasteneth to the prey.* The Naturalists observe that the Eagle soars aloft in the air, so high, that the eye of man cannot discern her, yet the Eagle is of such a piercing eye (Eagle-eyed is a proverb for quick-sighted) that she can discern her prey upon the earth, yea in the water, and as soon as the Eagle espies her prey, she pours or sowces down upon it like a thunderbolt, like a bullet out of a gun, or an arrow out of a bow. Thus Job's dayes passed as an Eagle in her flight, and not in her ordinary flight, but as an Eagle that hasteneth to the prey, when hunger adds swiftness to her wings; such was the passage of his dayes.

Tanquam fulmen se è sublimi in terram jeculatur.

There is somewhat further observable in this, from the translation of the Seventy, who render it thus, *Is there any sign or mark in the way of a ship, or of an Eagle?* So the meaning of Job should be, that his life, in respect of former comforts and contentments, was past away, and had left no mark, no sign behind it. The ship in the sea passeth away, and there is no rode, no tract left; and the Eagle in the air passeth, and you cannot see where the Eagle made her flight, the air closeth presently, there is no way

Numquid est navibus vestigium viae, aut aquilæ volatus? Eccl. Sept.

way to be seen : *Solomon* useth those similies, *Prov. 30. 19.* There be three things which I know not, the way of an Eagle in the Air, the way of a Serpent upon a rock, and the way of a ship in the Sea : And it is frequent in Authours to expresse those things which pass away, not leaving any tract or print behind them, by the motion of a ship in the sea, and of an Eagle in the air.

Hence note, That

The best of worldly things when they are gone, are as if they had never been.

There are two motions which will certainly leave a mark behind them : First, motions in sin. 2. In holiness : Every step we tread in the wayes of sin, or of holiness, leaves a print, a remembrance behind it ; but when the riches and honours, the pleasures and contentments of this life are past, nothing remains of them. It is said, *Dan. 8. 5.* (which may serve for the illustration of this place) in the vision of the He-goat, that he touched not the ground : that He-goat was a type of *Alexander the great*, who set up the *Grecian Empire* ; and he is compared to a He-goat, which did not touch the ground, because of his speedy conquests. When a man or beast runs upon the ground with extream speed, we say, they do not touch the ground. When the Hare leaves a deep tract, the hunter knows she runs slowly and is almost spent. *Alexander* conquered the world sooner then a man could well travel over it. And as *Alexander* came in, so he passed out, both in his person and posterity : For within a short time no man could tell what was become of the *Grecian Monarchy* ; the conquests of *Alexander* could not be found, no more then the way of a ship in the Sea, or of an Eagle in the air, or of a man running so fast that he leaves no print behind him.

Secondly, Taking both these similitudes in the ordinary notion, as they import the swift passage of *Jobs* prosperity. 'Tis questioned, How *Job* can be excused for speaking thus sleighly and undervaluingly of his temporall estate, which was so raised, and so enriched, that he was an eye-sore to the devil ; Satan envied him, because of his abundance. And doth he now make nothing of it ? Was it nothing to be the greatest man in the East ? is he not very unthankfull for, or very forgetfull of the goodness and bounty of God to him ? should he not rather have said, I have had my dayes of prosperity, my worldly comforts, and I enjoyed these a long time ?

*Quæ nullum
sui cursus sig-
num relinquunt
per avium vo-
latum et navi-
um transmissio-
nem significan-
tur. sanct.*

*Jobusq; ad Sa-
tanæ invidi-
am, benedictam
domum, benedi-
ctam familiam
habebat.*

I answer, *Job* speaks not this to obscure the favours of God to him, or ungratefully to pass by his blessing; but he answers the objection of his friends, and maintains the argument he brought against them. His argument was, that the estate of a godly man in this life, is as transitory and as brittle, as the estate of a wicked man, and that therefore there can be no distinction made of men by outward dispensations: To clear which he saith, *Look to my good dayes, they are past away swiftly*, and there's nothing remaining of them. Whence observe,

That the outward estate of the best men in the world, is as transitory and fading as that of the worst in the world.

My dayes (saith *Job*) my comfortable dayes are passed away, Every man at his best estate is altogether vanity, *Psal. 39. 5.* It is not only a wicked man, whose outward estate is vain, but every mans; *Dauids* Crown and Scepter were fading, vanishing flowers. *Abraham* and all the Patriarchs said (*Heb. 11.*) *We have here no continuing City*; neither City nor Citizens have long continuance here. The Apostle (*1 Cor. 7. 31.*) speaks to the Saints, and bids them take their hearts off from the world, and not to drench or steep their spirits in things here below; why? *The fashion of this world passeth away*, the fashion of the world in your hands; if you have the world in your hands, the fashion of it will perish there, as soon as in the hands of other men. Do not think that the world is put into an abiding state, or into an unalterable fashion for your sakes. A godly man and a wicked man (though made of the most different fashion) live in a world, and possess worldly things of the same fashion.

Quem ad modum qui navigat. sive stet, sive sedeat, vadit quia impulsus navis ducitur: ita et nos, sive vigilantes. sive dormientes, sive tacentes, sive loquentes, sive nolentes, sive volentes, per momenta temporum quorundam in finem tendimus.
Greg.

Secondly, As from the first similitude, so from these we learn, *How transitory our time is.* See how *Job* multiplies comparisons, that if we will not learn by the first, we might yet be convinced by a second and a third. Goe to the land, see time upon the spur, in the swift riding Post. Goe to the sea, see time upon the windes, in the swift sailing ship. Goe to the air, see time upon the wing, in the swift flying Eagle. These all preach the speedy passage of time. How sad is it to see men live, as if there dayes were *suavi pac'd*, not *post-pac'd*? as if time lay alwayes at an anchor, or were winde-bound, and could not use her sails? as if it had leaden heels and not wings, or were bound hand and foot, and could not stir? The Apostles caution is, *Redeem the time*; and now we have the Apostles argument to enforce it, *The dayes are evil.* If time go out

out of your hand, you cannot fetch it back again; there is no rhetoric can recall it, or price redeem it: time is such a commodity, as all the power in the world cannot recover, if lost and let slip. If all the Crowns and Kingdoms in the world should be laid down as a reward for the bringing back of one hour, yea of one moment of time, they could not obtain it. Therefore improve the present time: No time is yours, but the present, the time that's gone comes no more; the time that is to come, may find you gone before it comes: your time is only the present time, and that is past as soon as present.

But not to stay long upon that which moveth so swiftly, our dayes and time: I will pass to the other branch, wherein Job further clears the point in the five following verses.

J O B Chap. 9. Vers. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

If I say I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort myself:

I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?

If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean;

Yet shall thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.

THese words contain a proof of the latter part of Job's assumption. He had affirmed, that an innocent and righteous person may quickly lose all his outward comforts; which he illustrated by three similitudes: now he proves that he may be entangled and lime-twig'd with afflictions beyond hope of escape. This he doth in the 27, 28, 29. verses. Which he amplifies with hyperbolicall strains, in the 30. and 31. verses. The highest rhetoric of his sorrows being let out, to shew how remediless his sorrows were. *If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; Yet shall thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me; things are ill with me, and I see not,*
which

which way to mend my self. I am so far from any probability of help by contending and striving with God, that I have no hope of it by washing and cleansing my self. As carnal and earthly succours fail me, so these heavenly and spiritual duties will not succour me. I will give you the sum and substance of these five verses, in a few words together, and then open the particulars.

The general sense of the context may be thus conceived, As if Job had said;

I poor man in this condition study to forget the troubles which are upon me; and laying aside all anger, passion and discontentments with which ye charge me, I labour to refresh and revive my self with hopes of some dawning or near drawing deliverance; but while I am assaying to doe this, my sorrows assault me afresh, and even over-whelm my infant hopes, my beginning, budding comforts, with mighty terrors; so that now I even despair of recovery out of the band of my affliction, and am perswaded that I shall not only not be delivered that I may appear or be accounted pure and innocent, but if continued afflictions be an argument of wickedness (as you affirm) I shall have the bonds of my present trouble so fastned upon me, and such new ones, it may be stronger ones added, that I shall still look in your eyes, and be viewed in the glass of your opinion, like a wicked man. Wherefore then should I deceive my self with hopes that I shall be delivered? Or that God will awake for me, and make the habitation of my righteousness prosperous? When as I beleive and am very confident, that how pure and righteous soever I am, or (by further washing and cleansing, beleiving and repenting) shall appear to be, yet the Lord hath an intent to try me further, even to the uttermost, and will cast me into the ditch, mire and dirt, of further afflictions; so that they who make up their judgements by your rule, though they were as near to me as the clothes upon my back, must yet abhor, and loath me (as ye my friends now doe) as a wicked person. He seems to speak as the Apostle doth, 1 Cor. 4. 9. I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were men appointed unto death, for we are made a spectacle to the world, and to Angels, and to men.

This is the sum and general sense of these five verses. The words are full of difficulty, and there is much variety of judgements about them: but I hope in the close to make out a sense upon every particular, which shall be matching and sutable with this which hath been given in generall.

If I say, I will forget my complaint.

If I say.] In this Job answereth directly to the charge of Bildad at the 8th Chapter, vers. 2. *How long wilt thou speak of these things, and shall thy words be like an East-winde?* To which answers Bildad, *If I should cease speaking (as thou seemest to chide me into silence) If I should say, I will not complain any more, I will give over these mournfull discourses, and bide in my strongest pains, What then? will the event prove what thou hast promised? surely no, I am afraid of all my sorrows, and almost assured, that they will return upon me. If I say I will forget my complaint.*

I will forget.

The word which we render [*forget*] may signifie a three-fold forgetfulness.

First, Forgetfulness coming from the neglect of our natural abilities, when we are careless and take no heed to remember.

Secondly, Forgetfulness arising from the weakness of our natural abilities; when though we are carefull, yet we cannot remember.

But Job means neither of these, he intends a third kind of forgetfulness, even a studied and an affected forgetfulness; when how able soever we are, yet we will not, or would not remember. *If I say, I will forget my complaint;* that is, if I purposely set my self, or labour to forget my sorrows, yet I cannot get off their remembrance. As the Hebrew (*Sachar*) signifies not only the natural act of memory, but diligence in remembring: So doth the Hebrew (*Zachab*) to forget. It is sometimes as hard a work to forget, as it is at any time to remember. How do the damned in hell strive to forget their pains and complaints? they would count it a happiness, if they could put their misery out of minde and memory one hour; but they cannot. And they can no more forget what they have felt, then not be sensible of what they feel. *If I say, I will forget*

My complaint.

The word notes meditation, and here, *a mournfull meditation*, a breathing forth in mournfull expressions. The same word is used, Chap. 7. vers. 13. *When I say, My bed shall comfort me, and my couch shall ease my complaint (or my mournfull meditation) then*

שכח

Est oblivisci, ut

וכר

Recordari cum

cura & dili-

gentia.

שיח

Sapit hoc ver-

bum medita-

bundum quen-

dam sermonem,

et est um intel-

lectus vocisq;

discursum.

*Miseriae memo-
riam omnem
deponam. Dru.*

thou scarest me with dreams. So then, Job's meaning is, If I should set my self with greatest intention to forget, that is, to lay aside the thought of my troubles and sorrows, and say, I will leave off my heaviness, and complain no more, I will not pore upon my afflictions, but resolve to be above them, yet it will not be. I find no ease: Forgetfulness is a medicine for some diseases and pains, but I find no cure, no remedy that way, for mine. Whence observe,

There are some things which man can very hardly forget, or get out of his mind.

We may study their forgetfulness, and yet not be able to forget them. And they are of two sorts. First, Worldly pleasures. Secondly, Worldly sorrows. These will not fail to minde us. We need the art, or rather the grace of forgetfulness to lay these aside. And there are two things which we are slow to remember. First, Our own duties. And secondly, The mercies of God. About these we need the art, or rather the grace of memory. And usually they who have most neglected to remember duty, are most afflicted with the constrained remembrance of their own sorrow. And they shall not be able at all to forget the wrath of God, who would not remember the mercies of God. *If I say, I will forget my complaint.*

I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort my self.

*פני
Notat faciem,
iram etiam et
tristitiam.*

Leave off my heaviness.] The Hebrew word for word, is, *I will lay aside my face*; for that which strictly, and in the letter of that language, signifies the face or countenance of a man, doth also signifie, First, Anger and Wrath. Secondly, Sorrow and Heaviness. 'Tis put for anger, *Psal. 34. 16. The face (or anger) of the Lord is against such as doe evil. (Lam. 4. 16. Levit. 17. 10.) I will set my face*, that is, I will shew my anger, and manifest my displeasure against them.

And the reason why that word which signifies the countenance or face, signifies also anger and wrath, sorrow and heaviness, is, because both anger and sorrow break forth in the face. If a man be very angry, you shall see his anger scribled in the uneven character of his countenance: If a man be very heavy and sorrowfull, you shall see the lines of sorrow drawn in his face. Therefore it is said of *Hannah (1 Sam. 1. 18.)* when she received a refreshing and reviving answer from the Lord in prayer (the poor soul fate drooping

drooping and mourning, as much as praying, but as soon as she had a hint of audience and acceptance, it is said, *She went away and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad*: the sadness of her heart appeared no more in her countenance, there was fair weather in her face, and Sun-shine in her fore-head, the rain and showers of her tears were blown over and dried up. As in some sinners, *The shew of their countenance doth testifie against them*, (Isa. 3. 9.) that is, they are so grossely wicked, that you may see sin in their faces, whereas others can keep sin close enough in their hearts, they can keep the disease in, and shut themselves up, when they are sick of the plague of their hearts (1 King. 8.) nothing but holiness is discernable in the face of their conversation, when nothing but rottenness and corruption lies at the bottome of their spirits. But as the corruption of many a mans heart breaks forth in botches upon the face of his actions, and the rottenness of his spirit blisters upon his tongue in unfavoury speeches: so those passions and affections of the heart, joy and sorrow, anger and heaviness, appear in the face, and we may read the distempers of the heart in the disguisedness of a look. The face is the *Index* of the heart, that tells you, how things goe within. Therefore *Job* saith, *If I leave off my face*, meaning as we translate, *If I leave off my heaviness*, which is so evident in my face, or which is as easie to be seen as my face; *If I resolve to appear chearfull and merry*, and will not let clouds darken my countenance any longer, yet, &c. The face is put generally for the appearance or out-side of any thing; as we say, the face of the earth, the face of the heavens, the face of the Church, or Common-wealth. So that, *To leave off heaviness, or the face*, is to leave off all shew of heaviness. As *Joseph* left off his tears of joy (Gen. 43. 30, 31.) who, having eased his heart of his joyfull sorrows, by weeping secretly in his chamber *Washed his face, went out and refrained himself*. Thus *Job* would have washed his mournfull tears from his face, he attempted to refrain himself; but he could not, his sorrows were too strong for him; and as he could not remove, so he could not dissemble them. For this *leaving off*, is to be taken as the precedent act of *forgetting*, for an affected, resolved laying aside. If I make it my business to be chearfull, and *leave off my heaviness*, yet &c. Observe hence,

Sorrow is not easily shaken off.

Sorrow sticks close. It is very hard for a man to play

*Cordis index
vultus, totusq;
homo est in fa-
cie.*

*Nomen faciei
in Scriptura
significat exte-
riorem habi-
tum, sicut fa-
cies terræ celi
reip. Bold.*

*Latina vox fa-
cies significat
non solum os o-
culos genas, sed
formam omnem,
modum et fa-
turam totius
corporis, a faci-
endo dictam.*

Aul. Gel.

the hypocrite with his sorrow, or dissemble the sadness of his heart, but it is far harder to be really delivered of it. Sorrow is a companion that will not be cast off with a word. A man may more easily cover his sin, then his sorrow. Many can put a vi-
 four of holiness upon their faces, when nothing but wickedness is in their hearts ; but it is not easie to make a shew of comfort, when nothing but sorrow is in the heart. Grief will out. Heaviness in the heart, is like *the ointment in the right hand*, of which Solomon speaks (*Prov. 27. 16.*) *that it bewrayeth it self*. One said of a merry Atheist, *He laugheth to thee and to me* ; that is, he seems to laugh, but he mourns to himself, the mans heart is heavy. If it be not so, yet it may be so with all wicked men, when they are merriest in the face, they have reason to have sorrow even unto death in their hearts : it is a hard thing (I say) to put sorrow out of the face, much more to get it out of the heart ; when it is lodged there once, it will not soon be dispossest. The Apostle (*Heb. 12. 1.*) exhorts, *To lay aside every weight, and to cast off the sin that doth so easily beset us* ; he means it of the sin of nature, which we bear about us ; this sin (saith he) doth easily beset us, but let us cast it off, that is, let us study and strive to lay aside this heaviness of sin which is the truest cause of the heaviness of sorrow. One would think that a man needs not much perswasion, when he hath any heavy burthen upon his shoulders, to lay it aside ; yet (so it is) man can hardly be perswaded to lay aside this burthen, and it is the business we have with your souls every day, to perswade you to lay it aside. *It is a weight that easily besets us.* Now as we need much exhortation to cast off the weight of this sin, which is so pleasing, so also of sorrow, though it be unpleasant. When sorrow besets us, it leaves us without ease, but sorrow easily besets us. Job found it a hard task to lay aside his burden. Because his friends thought he fed too much upon his afflictions, therefore he tryed what he could doe, but it would not doe. *If I say, I will leave off my heaviness, I will comfort my self, &c.* See the issue by and by.

I will comfort my self.

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Comfort is the very life of our lives, the spring of our year, the light of our day, the Sun in our firmament, the complement of mercy : and therefore Christ gives his Church the sum of all mercy, in that one promise of sending the Comforter. The Hebrew

brew word signifies to strengthen, because when a man is cast down with sorrows his spirit is weakned, *Comfort is the repair of strength; If I say, I will comfort, that is, corroborate and strengthen my self* (Psal. 39. 13.) *O spare me* (saith David) *that I may recover my strength*; or that I may a little comfort my self: The Septuagint renders it, *That I may get my life again*, that I may be enlivened, and re-insouled, or fetch back my soul again. Here, if I say I will comfort my self, *Take heart at grass* (as we say) and play the man, then my sorrows renew upon me.

Roboravit, confortavit, vires collegit. Sep. a va-lūgo.

But some may object; how is it that *Job* takes upon him to comfort himself? Is it any wonder if *Job* came short of comfort, when he went to himself for comfort?

Comfort is not a commodity to be found in the hand or power of any creature; the great God hath all that in his own hand; if any man will have comfort, he must trade to heaven for it. It is the honour of God to be called, *The God of all comfort* (2 Cor. 1. 3.) that is, the God who hath all comfort at his dispose. As some Kings have a denomination from the great staple commodities of their Kingdoms. Our King is called, *The King of the wooll*, because wooll is the chief commodity, and more plentiful here, then in any other Country of the world. Another is called, *King of the Wines*: and another, *of the flax*. *Comfort is the staple commodity of heaven*; and God is called, *The God of all comfort*, not only because the chiefest and best comforts are in his hand, but because there is not the least imaginable comfort to be had out of his hand. He hath the monopoly of comfort, or rather the sole-gift of comfort. We can trouble and perplex our selves, but God only can comfort us. And he is *the God of all comfort*, of all sorts and of all degrees of comfort: the God, not only of spirituall, but of worldly comfort, of temporall comfort, as well as of eternal. As the joyes of the holy Ghost are in his hand, so are the joyes of civil relations; the joy of meat and drink, the joy of riches and honour are in his hand also, How then saith *Job*. *I will lay aside my heaviness. I will comfort my self*? It is a hard thing to comfort others (Luther said, *It is as easie a work to raise the dead, as to comfort the conscience*) but it is harder for a man to comfort himself. *Eliphaz* gave testimony to *Job* in the fourth Chapter (vers. 3, 4.) that he had *upholden him that was falling, and had strengthened the feeble knees*. But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled. Thou, who
hast

hast holpen others, canst not help thy self. Yet here *Job* was upon a resolve to comfort himself.

I answer, though it be a truth, that no man is able to comfort himself, no more then he can convert himself; and that a man is no more able to change his heart from sorrow to joy, then he is able to change his heart from sin to grace; yet, a man may attempt or assay, he may use means to comfort himself. When *Job* saith, *I will comfort my self*, the meaning is, I will do the utmost I can, I will not be behind in my endeavours, I will take the best course, and improve all opportunities to get out of these dumps; whosoever will prescribe me a way, or direct me to a remedy of these sorrows, I will submit to it, *I will comfort my self*. From whence note, That

What a man really endeavoureth to do, that he may be said to do.

I will comfort my self; Why? Because though he were not able to attain such an end (Joy and comfort lye beyond the line of the creature) yet he reached at it, he attempted and assayed all means to comfort himself. Thus the salvation of a man is ascribed to himself; a man is said to save himself, though salvation belongeth to the Lord, even temporal salvation, but especially eternall salvation, yet, a man may be said to save himself; as the Apostle (1 Epist. 4. 16.) exhorts *Timothy* to walk by a holy rule, to settle himself in his studies, to read the Scriptures, and to meditate in them, to be faithfull in dispensing of the Gospel, assuring him, *If thou dost these things, thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee. Save thyself*. No man can be his own Saviour; he may be as well his own Creator. *Timothy* was thus encouraged, because in so doing, he did all that a man ought, who expects salvation. That was the way to, though not the cause of salvation. *Salvation is all Christs, yet he who doth his best to save himself, may be said to save himself*. Thus also a man comforts himself, converts himself, instructs himself, when he putteth out to the utmost of gifts, graces, and opportunities to doe or attain duties and blessings. No man (saith the Prophet) doth stir himself up to take hold of the Lord. The word in the Prophet signifies to awake, or to watch; no man wakes or watches his opportunity to take hold of the Lord. It notes also that action of old birds, who flutter with their wings, and beat up their young ones, to urge and provoke them to use their wings, and flye abroad. Thus he complained because the
lazy

lazy, dull hearted Jews did not raise up and waken their hearts to doe what they could, though to doe it was more then they could.

Secondly, Observe, *That a man in affliction may help on his comforts or his sorrows.*

I will comfort myself, I will leave off my heaviness. Some add to their afflictions, and are active to aggravate and encrease them: they make their night darker, and obscure the light of counsell that is brought unto them: they joyn with Satan their enemy, and by the black melancholly vapours of their own hearts, stifle the consolations that are administred them by faithfull friends. Like *Rachel* (Jer. 31.) *they refuse to be comforted*; when reviving cordials are offered, they spill them upon the ground, and will not take in a drop: they are so far from comforting themselves, that they will not receive comfort from others. The Prophet seems to be resolved upon the point, he would go on in sorrows, *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me* (Isa. 22. 4.) As sometimes a man under great affliction bespeaks comfort from others, *O, I am in a sad case, come, comfort me, shew me how I may get ease from these sorrows.* Many beg prayers, and send bills of their afflictions, desiring to have them spread before the Lord in the Congregation, that some comfort may be dropt from heaven into their diseased bodies, or wounded spirits. Others sleight prayers, and care not to be comforted, as if it were an ease to them to mourn, and a refreshing to be in heaviness. There is a twofold ground upon which comforts are thus put off.

1. Some put off their comforts upon fullness of spirit; black and dark spirits love to bathe themselves in sorrow. *Sorrow is the bath of drooping spirits*; and it is Satans bath too. Melancholly is commonly called, *The devils bath*; he takes delight to wash in the streams of our unnecessary tears. Sorrow for sin puts the devil to the greatest sorrow. Godly grief is a grief to Satan: but he delighteth in our worldly sorrows, as the devil may be delighted: if he have delight in any thing, this is one thing he delights in, our forbidden sorrows. Some sorrows are as much forbidden as any pleasures. The devil is as much pleased with our unlawful sorrows, as he is with our unlawfull pleasures. And he labours as much to make us pleased with them.

2. Others help on their own sorrows, and lessen their comforts through

through forgetfulness or ignorance; they (as the Apostle chides the Hebrews, Chap. 12. 5.) have forgotten the exhortation, which speaks unto them as unto children. Now, as wicked men rejoyce, because they forget or know not their ill condition: So godly men are sad, when they forget or know not how good their condition is. Yet Job supposes the review of his good estate, would neither check his sorrows, nor establish his peace, *If I say, I will forget my complaint, I will comfort my self, I am afraid of all my sorrows.*

Thirdly, Observe, *Man is not able to comfort himself*; we can make our selves crosses, but we cannot make our selves comforts. A man may say, as Job did (Chap. 7. 13.) to his bed, comfort me; or to his riches; comfort me, or to his wine and good chear, comfort me; or to his friends, comfort me: He may say to all outward acts of pleasure, to merry company, and musick, comfort me; yea a Saint may say to his graces and holiness, comfort me; and yet none of these can comfort him, or, they comfort him in vain. To seek comfort any where but in Christ, is to seek the living among the dead. Christ is comfort clothed in our flesh, and he is the comfort of our spirits. Till he gives comfort, every man must conclude, as Job, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*:

I am afraid.

The word signifies strong trembling, and shaking fear.

Of all my sorrows.

The root hath a double signification. First, To afflict with grief (Isa. 63. 10.) *They vexed his holy Spirit*. Secondly, To fashion or form a thing (Job 10. 8.) *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me round about*. The same word by a Metaphor signifies both to greive and to fashion, to vex and to form, because a man that forms & fashions a piece of wood or stone, seems to put it to pain by cutting and hewing. And he that forms wax, vexes and chafes it in his hands. Thus I say, because of the fashioning of a thing, a man doth bruise, cut, and (as it were) put it to pain, therefore the same word signifies both to vex or greive, and to form or fashion. And this word is applyed unto the ill usage of words (Psal. 56. 5.) *Every day (saith David, speaking of his enemies) they wrest my words*; or they put my words to pain, and grief, or they painfully and grievously wrest my words. *Dauids enemies took up what he spake, and put a new shape upon it, and this they*

Timuit, expa-
vit præ metu
se abstrahere
timorem deno-
tat imminentis
calamitatis.

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Significat do-
lore officere, &
interdum figu-
rare.

Qui materiam
aliquam, ut lu-
tum vel ceram
figuratur a manibus
et digitis, is
illam premendo
quasi dolore
efficit. Bold.
Est elegans
metaphora;
verba alicujus
figurare, nam
qui verba de-
torquet aliam
figuram, i. e.
significationem
ei tribuit.

they did so vexingly, that they are said to wrest his words; a thing is vexed, when it is wrested, or wrought quite out of the form it before had. The same Metaphor the Apostle Peter useth in reference to Doctrine, 2 Pet. 3. 16. speaking of the Epistles of Paul, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, or put upon the rack; they painfully form his words, and represent them in a meaning which he never intended. What is spoken may be right, both in the matter and intendment of the speaker, yet another wrests, forms, and fashions it in his own mould, and makes it bear a sense which the speaker never dream'd of.

In this Text we have the *Noun* only, which importeth either the labour or pains, which a man taketh, or the pain and grief which a man feeleth. Hence in the Hebrew this word signifies an *Idol*, and both acceptions fall into the reason of it.

First, because Idols are made, fashioned, and formed up curiously, with a great deal of art and labour: the wax or clay, or stone, is put to pain; you must cut it and carve it to make an Idol.

Secondly, Because Idols are served, attended and worshipped with much pain and grief. False worship, or the worship of Idols, is alwayes more servile and painfull then true worship is. False worship is a painfull service, a servile service, a toyl rather then a worship; but the service of the true and everliving God is, an holy, an ingenious, a noble and an honourable service. Idols are troublesome, both in their making and in their worshipping. From this twofold interpretation of the word, I find a two-fold translation given.

First, Thus, *I am afraid of all my works*, as if Job, having a design to comfort himself in a reflection upon his good works, and former holy walkings, feared they would not serve his turn, or bear up his spirit in the evil day, which was come upon him. As if he had said; *I have lived as exactly by the rule of the word as I could; I have had respect to all the Commandements of God, that I might not sin against him. Yet I am afraid of all my works, the anger of God will surely seek thorow them all, or find holes or breaches in them to come in upon me at.*

*Verebar omnia
opera mea
Vulg.*

Thus he is conceived reasoning with himself. But doubtless it was not Job's meaning to look to the innocency or holiness of his life past, as the ground of his present comfort; he that would do so, may justly be afraid of all his works. When we see the best of

our selves, we have more reason to be afraid, then to be comforted. As we must work out our salvation with fear and trembling, so we have cause to fear and tremble at our works.

But rather as we translate, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*; that is, I no sooner endeavour to comfort my self, but presently my sorrows throng about me, they appear before my face, and make such a ghastly apparition, that I am afraid. Sorrows charge and assault me afresh, when I am purposing to make an escape from the hands of sorrow. When I think of leaving off my heaviness, or of getting out of the sight of it, sorrows come upon me with greater violence then before. While a prisoner is quiet and content with his restraint, the keeper layes no great restraint upon him; but if he perceive him meditating an escape, or attempting to break prison, and set himself at liberty, presently more irons are clapt upon him, and an advantage taken even to load him with chains. Such hard usage even this poor prisoner feared at the hand of his sorrows, *If I say, I will leave off my heaviness, I will throw off my bolts and fetters, and get out of these troubles, I am afraid of all my sorrows*; I shall have all the Keepers and Jaylers about me, they will lay more load upon me, and watch me more strictly then before: You tell me I am in love with my sorrows, the truth is, fears of sorrow compass me round about, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*.

Note hence: First, this general truth,

That affliction is matter of fear.

Natural fear arises from the apprehension of some approaching evil; and as fear grows more boisterous and inordinate, so it represents us with sadder (though but supposed) evils.

Secondly, Observe, *A godly man may be much oppressed with the fear of afflictions.*

When I would comfort myself, I am afraid of all my sorrows: it is terrible to me to think that they still encrease upon me, and that whilst I hope to escape, I am more ensnared. Christ himself, when he was in our nature, and cloathed with our flesh, was afraid of all his sorrows: he was a *man of sorrows*, and he was afraid of his sorrows too, *Matth. 26. 38.* He said, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death; and he offered up prayers and supplications with strong cryes and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared* (*Heb. 5.*) His were extraordinary sorrows indeed, such as no creature ever felt or tasted. The

Cup of sorrow which he drank was mixed and tempered with all our sorrows, and with the cause of them, our sins. This was it he feared, being in our nature; though as that nature was hypostatically united unto the divine nature, it had infinitely more power to bear all those sorrows, then we have in our nature to bear the least sorrow. Now, if Christ himself in our flesh was afraid of his sorrows, which yet he knew he should overcome, how much more may the fear of sorrows overcome us, while we are in the flesh?

Lastly, Observe, *That the fear of afflictions assaults and oppresses some most, when they set themselves most to conquer and overcome them.*

I, saith Job, *would comfort myself, but I am afraid of all my sorrows*; I fear they will be doubled and trebled upon me, therefore I had rather sit still, then by striving to unloose, straiten the cords of my affliction faster upon me. The next clause seems to hint this as a reason, why his sorrows hung so close upon him.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

But how did Job know this? As God said to Adam (Gen. 3. 11.) *Who told thee that thou wast naked?* So I may say to Job, *who told thee that God would not hold thee innocent?* Or, where hadst thou this assurance of thy condemnation? The Saints may know, or be assured that God will pardon them; but a wicked man cannot know, or be assured that God will not. This knowledge of Job was but a suspicion or at the most a conjecture. And the giving out of this conjecture was but the language of his fear, his faith could say no such thing, for God had no where said it, *The best men speak sometimes from their worse part.* Their graces may be silent a while, and leave corruption to have all the talk. When the flesh is under great pain, the spirit is hindered from acting its part, and then sense gets the mastery over faith. Had it not been upon such a disadvantage, Job had never offended with his tongue, by saying he knew what he could not know.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

The word which we translate *innocent*, cometh from a root which signifieth pure and clean, and in the verb to cleanse and make pure: And because innocency is the purity or cleanness of a person, therefore the same word signifies to cleanse, and to

י קנא

à radice

קנא

Purus, mundus,

per metapho-

ram innocens,

insons.

hold or make innocent : in which sense it is used frequently, Ex. 20. 2. *Thou wilt not hold him guiltless* (or innocent) *that taketh thy Name in vain.* The counsel that David gave upon his death-bed unto Solomon concerning Joab, was, *Therefore hold thou him not innocent,* or guiltless (1 King. 2. 9.) that is, let the blood which he hath shed be upon him, let his honour and his name continue stained and blemished in thy thoughts and judgement, *Hold him not innocent.*

Here the Question is, To what antecedent we are to refer the relative, *Thou ? I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent ; Thou, who ?*

There are two opinions about it. Some refer it to God, and some to Bildad, to whom Job maketh answer in this place.

They that refer it unto God, make out the sense thus. Either, first, taking the word properly for cleansing and healing the sores and wounds which were upon his body ; *I know thou wilt not cleanse my body from this filthiness, from these diseases that now annoy me ;* And so it is in answer to the words of Bildad, telling Job, that in case he fought unto God, and humbled himself before him, he would awaken for him, and remove those judgements. No, saith Job, when I think of ease and deliverance, all my fears return upon me, and I know God will not yet cleanse, ease, or deliver me from them.

Again, Taking it tropically (as we render it) for a judicial cleansing or purification ; so, *Thou wilt not hold me innocent,* is as much as this, Lord, such sorrows and troubles are upon me, that I fear thou wilt not declare, or pronounce, or give testimony concerning me to the world, that I am an innocent person. Because the sores and troubles upon him, were as an evidence against him in the judgement of his friends, that he was a wicked person, therefore (saith he) Lord, I am afraid, *Thou wilt not hold me,* that is, *Thou wilt not declare me to be innocent,* by taking away these evils, that so this opinion of my friends concerning me may be removed or confuted.

From this sense note :

First, *That even a godly man in deep afflictions may have misgiving thoughts of God.*

The soul misgives sometimes about the pardon of sin, and is even swallowed up with despair, concluding, *I know God will*

Adversus illud quod amici statuunt, probos, videlicet, etiam castigatos nunquam succidi, hoc pro certo statuam, & Deus, nunquam esse me ab istis quibus totus scateo seditissimis ulceribus ac vermibus repurgandum.
Bez.

Novi quod non sis me liberum dimissurus.
Coc.

Non mandabis, i. e. purum, justum, vel etiam innocentem non declarabis.

not hold me innocent, he will not be reconciled unto me, or blot out my transgression.

But especially (which is rather the mind of *Job*) the soul misgives about release from punishment. Some being hamper'd in the bands of affliction, conclude, God will never let them loose, or set them at liberty again. Such a conclusion *David's* unbelief made against himself, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul*, (1 Sam. 27. 1.) When *Jonah* was cast into the deep, in the midst of the seas, when the floods compassed him, and all the billows and waves passed over him, then he said, Chap. 2. 4. *I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes*. Indeed *Jonah* began to recover quickly, his next words being a breath of faith, *Yet I will look again toward thy holy Temple*.

Secondly, Observe, *That untill fear of guilt be removed, fear of troubles will not remove*.

Job was not very clear about the pardon of his sins; somewhat stuck upon his spirit, while he was under the clouds and darkness of this temptation; therefore he saith, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*. Till the soul is settled in the matter of pardon, or freedome from guilt, it can never be settled about freedome from punishment. Hence the Apostle (Heb. 2. 10. 15.) speaking of the Saints before the coming of Christ, calls Christ, the Captain of our salvation, and assures us, he took flesh, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver those who through fear of death, were all their life time subject unto bondage. The language is very near this of the Text, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*. As *Job* was in bondage under his afflictions through the fear of his returning sorrows: So, they were all their life time subject unto bondage, through the fear of approaching death. All the Saints before the coming of Christ were under such a bondage, for the Apostle speaks as of a general state, *That he might deliver those, who through the fear of death, were all their life time subject unto bondage*. The reason hereof, was, because they had not so manifest and convincing a light concerning the pardon of sin, the freeness of grace, and the abundance of that mercy which was brought in afterwards, and revealed by Jesus Christ, when he actually made our attonement by the blood of his Cross: for howsoever it is undeniable, that the faithfull under the old Testament, had knowledge of that satisfaction which was to be made by the Mediatour for the removing of sin, and the taking away

away of guilt (every sacrifice spake this, shewing that there was an atonement to be made by some other blood, which the blood of the sacrifice typified) yet notwithstanding there was not a clearing and a quieting of their hearts, because Christ (though in the promise slain from the beginning of the world) was not actually slain, nor offered up for sinners. The Apostle (*Heb. 10. 1, 2.*) argues upon the same point, That the Law with those Sacrifices, could not make the comers thereunto perfect, that is, it could not assure the heart that sin was taken away, for if it could, then (saith he) the sacrifices should not have needed to be offered up so often. What needed any repetition, seeing they who were once so purged should have had no more conscience of sin, that is, sin should never have troubled and vexed their consciences any more? But now Christ by one offering hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified (verse 14.) that is, he hath made a perfect satisfaction for them; and compleated the peace of their consciences. So then, while there remaineth any scruple about sin, fears of evil will hang upon the spirit. And we find that the old Saints were very fearfull of outward afflictions, because they had as it were a relish or taste of the disfavour and displeasure of God in them. And in proportion, as any of them had more or less of free grace appearing to them, so they were more or less enthralled with these fears. We may observe throughout the old Testament, that there was not such a spirit of rejoycing in sufferings and afflictions, as we find breakings forth in the new. Paul never saith, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*; No, he saith, *As sorrowfull, yet alwayes rejoycing*. You never hear him complain of his afflictions. He indeed complains of his corruptions, *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death!* But he never said, *O miserable man, how am I afflicted, I am in deaths often, who shall deliver me from this death of the body!* We find the Saints under the Gospel clothed with a spirit of exultation and rejoycing, of which we hear little, if any thing at all under the Law: The want of which we are to ascribe to their want of a clear light about the removing of guilt, and pardon of sin. *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

Thirdly, observe, That God often deals with his best servants in regard of outward troubles, as if they were guilty.

I know thou wilt not hold me innocent, that is, thou wilt not deal with me as with an innocent person. As the Lord dealt with his Son,

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Son, so he deals with his servants. God the Father dealt with Jesus Christ as with a guilty person (*Isa. 53.9, 12.*) He was numbred among transgressours, and made his grave with the wicked. The Lord reckoned him as a sinner, while he was satisfying his justice for sin, and making an atonement for sinners. *Job* is no where called a type of Christ, but he was like him, and their parallel might be drawn in many things, especially in this, that both were numbred with the wicked, and in that both were used, as if they had been guilty. The dispensations of God to his own beloved Son once did, and to his faithfull servants often do look like those to the greatest transgressours. His Son was handled, so that he might redeem sinners; his servants are so handled, sometimes to prevent, often to purge them from sin; sometimes to try their graces, alwayes to make them fitter vessels for glory. Though we cannot make any earnings toward glory, by the weightiest afflictions, yet these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I shall pass from this reference of the word, *Thou*, when I have breisly vindicated the text from the corruptions of some Papists, who urge it to prove the uncertainty of our justification. *Job* (say they) doubted whether God would declare him just or no. I answer, Justified persons may have doubts, yet that doth not argue the uncertainty of justification. Justification is a sure act in it self, and we may be sure of it, though some are unsettled about it. This Scripture gives no shelter, much less support, to that doctrine of doubting. The Vulgar reading, grossly varying from the original, is all the shadow it hath in this place. For as that Translatour mistakes the former clause which he renders, *I am afraid of all my works*: So this latter, which he renders, *Knowing that thou wilt not pardon or spare him that offendeth*. He that seeks to be justified by his works, shall not want fears about his justification: and if this be a truth, which their translation seem to hold forth, that God will not pardon him that offendeth, the best and holiest men in the world have reason, not only to fear whether they are justified, but to resolve they can never be justified in his sight. If every man that sinneth must doubt of the pardon of sin, all men must doubt. In that common acception of the word *offend*, it is false, that God will not pardon him that offends: whom should he pardon but such as offend? They who are above sin, are above pardon. *Job* never thought God would not pardon.

Bellarmin. l. 5.
de justif. cap. 5.

Sciens quod
non parceret
delinquenti.
Vulg.

pardon him because he had sinned, it being one of the Royal Titles of God, *The God pardoning iniquity transgression and sin.* But if we take sinning or offending in a stricter sense, as it imports a man obstinate and still engaged with delight to sin (in which sense the next Title of the Lords great name, after, *Forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin,* is to be understood, *And that will by no means clear the guilty* (Exod. 34 7.) The Hebrew is, *And that clearing will not clear.* We supply the word *guilty*; which the Chaldee well explains by this periphrasis, *Him that will not convert, or turn to the Lord*) such offenders the Lord will not pardon. But to say that the Lord will not spare and pardon such guilty persons, such delinquents, as will not return unto him, but go on to add one wickedness to another, is no denial of the Saints assurance of pardon, they being already turned and converted to the Lord. So much for that clause, as the antecedent refers unto God, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

But rather take the antecedent to be Bildad. *I know, thou Bildad, wilt not hold me innocent*; as if Job had said, *When I think of comforting myself, my wounds bleed afresh, and my sorrows present themselves to my thoughts again, by the sight of which I am assured I shall not be judged innocent by thee, but rather more wicked, as my sorrows appear to be more; for seeing thou art resolved to conclude the multitude of my sins from the multitude of my sufferings, in vain shall I labour to shew and approve myself as an innocent person before thee, when as I shall still be an afflicted person before thee; I know thou canst not hold me innocent, while abiding afflictions lead thy judgement to conclude that a man is wicked. How shall I being in trouble gain any credit of integrity, in thy opinion, so long as outward troubles render me a hypocrite in thy opinion?*

In vanum laborabo ostendam tibi afflictum simul et innocentem me esse posse. Bol.

I shall note only this from it, *He that judgeth of a mans innocency by his outward estate, may for ever condemn an innocent.* Bildad judged so of Job, this caused Job to say, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent, or think me good, seeing evils are still upon me, and are like to continue upon me still. Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgement,* is the rule of Christ (John 7. 24.) as if they could hardly judge what is right, who judge by what appears. We must not judge of things till they appear; nor may we judge of persons by their appearance. As oftentimes in holiness, so sometime in sinfulness, men are not what they seem to be. All is not gold that glisters, and some gold doth not glister:

glisten: Many are not that in holiness, which they seem to be by their actions toward God; and some are not in sinfulness, what they seem to be by Gods acting toward them. It is easier to do good, then to be good; and usually they who are good suffer that which is evil.

Verse 29. *If I be wicked, Why then labour I in vain?*

These words may be connected with either of the interpretations given upon the former verse, *I know thou (O God) or thou (O Bildad) wilt not hold me innocent.* Now then,

If I be wicked, &c.

The Original word hath been heretofore opened. Only note, that the Hebrew is absolute, and not by way of supposition, plainly thus, *I am wicked*, or, *I shall be accounted wicked*, *Why therefore labour I in vain?* Or, now therefore I labour in vain. When Job saith, *I am wicked*, it is not as if he gave the cause, and assented to his friends, Ye have had an ill opinion of me all this while, now I begin to have as ill an opinion of my self, *I am wicked*. No, he means it only thus, I am handled or accounted as a wicked man, *I am wicked*, in your thoughts, and the providence of God seems to give you occasion of thinking so, ye look upon me, as if I were a wicked man, and I look like one, *Why then labour I in vain?*

Why labour I in vain?

The word signifies hardest labour; why do I travel so painfully to vindicate my self, and to stand fair in your eyes? It is labouring with toile, or moiling labour, answerable to that Greek word (*κοπιδω*) which signifies sore and extreame labour. It is too much to bestow any labour in vain (that is, without fruit or success) much more to bestow hard and sore labour.

But what was this sore, hard and painful labour? He means all those labours which he bestowed, either to extricate himself from his sufferings, or to clear himself from their prejudice of his sinfulness, because he suffered, as if he had said in particulars.

Why do I labour in Apologues to excuse my self? Or in arguments defend my cause? *Why do I labour* in prayer to deprecate these troubles, and get out of the bands of my afflictions? Pleading for our selves with men, in hard labour, but especiall plead-

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ing

אובי ארע
Ego impius.

Impius hoc loco non qui sit, sed qui ut improbus tractetur, vel qui impius videatur, & liquet Jobum suis amicis Impium fuisse visum ut qui in hoc Christum praeferret, quod cum impijs reputatus fuit. Fr. Joh.

וַיִּלָּבֵד
Laboravit, defatigatus fuit, Graeco κοπιδω responderet, & notat ex labore summam molestiam.

לָבַד
הָבַל pro
MATHE. Aquil.

ing for our selves with God. Prayer is strong labour, therefore it is called *wrestling*: Bildad advised Job to pray unto God, in the 8th. Chapter; here Job seems to answer, *Why labour I in prayer*, and in seeking unto God, seeing all's in vain, and lost labour? to what end should I labour in any of these duties, *for I am wicked* (in the opinion of man) or, *if I be wicked*, in the sight of God, or seeing God hath cast me into such a condition, as appearingly and visibly casts me among the wicked.

For the better understanding of this, we may consider the words, as an argument by way of Dilemma, *If I be wicked, Why then labour I in vain? If I wash my self with Snow-water, &c.* As if he had said, Either I am wicked, or I am clean and pure; If I am wicked (as you say I am) I deserve more punishment, then I labour in vain to be eased of this. If I am pure and clean, as washed with Snow-water, what will the issue be? God will yet cast me into the ditch of affliction; so that I am between two walls, hemmed in on both sides: *Wickedness would certainly ruine me, and my righteousness will not deliver me; Why therefore do ye feed me with vain hopes that I shall be delivered, if I were righteous?* So Bildad assured him in the former Chapter.

More particularly, *If I am wicked, Why then labour I in vain?*

*Si vita prae-
rita laboribus
et pietatis stu-
dio sanctitatem
non comparavi,
neq; coram Deo
justus habeor,
certe labor me-
us inanis fuit.
Aquin.*

*Si autem et sic
impius sum fru-
stra laboravi,
i. e. si impius
sum, ut vos de
me dicitis. Vul.*

First, Some interpret his words as a contest with God; Thus; if by my study of holiness, and care to walk circumspectly in thy wayes, I have not yet gained the reputation of holiness; If I cannot yet pass in thy account for a godly man, surely I shall still labour in vain about that point, as hitherto I have done.

But secondly (for I lay this aside) Others thus, *If I am wicked*, it is a vain thing for me to seek the Lord, as you advise me. Why will you put me upon a business, which will be fruitless and without success? It was the word of God in Job's time, though no Scripture, *That God heareth not Sinners*: Not such sinners as Job's friends challenged him to be. So Job seems to compare their opinion of him, and counsel given him thus together; your opinion of me is, that I am a wicked man; your counsel to me is, that I should seek unto God: Surely, your opinion of me, and your counsel to me can never agree, for if I am wicked (as you hold me to be) I labour in vain, while I obey your counsel.

There is a sense, wherein it is in vain for a wicked man to seek unto God, and a sense wherein it is not in vain for a wicked man to seek unto God: we must distinguish of this interpretation.

If

If a man be wicked, it is in vain for him to seek unto God, while he loveth wickedness and delighteth in it. *Psal. 66. 2* If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer. He that is wicked, as to love wickedness, prayes in vain, fasts and humbles his soul in vain. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, that is, the Lord abominates his sacrifice, but, *The prayer of the upright is his delight*. Solomon describes an hypocrite in the former words: he is one that will pray and offer sacrifice, and yet puts the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face (*Ezek. 14. 4.*) So they (*Jer. 7. 4.*) cried, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these*; The Prophet discovers, who these zealous Templers were, *vers. 9. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and then come and stand in this house, which is called by my Name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?* Some mingle prayer and fasting with stealing and murdering: such praying and fasting, are as unacceptable to God, as stealing and murdering are: Such labouring to please the Lord, is displeasing to the Lord. *What hast thou to do (saith God to the wicked) to take my Covenant in thy mouth (Psalm. 50. 16.)* Doth God say to the wicked, *What hast thou to do with my Covenant?* For whom is the Covenant made, but for the wicked? If men were not wicked or sinful, what needed there a Covenant of Grace? The Covenant is for the wicked. And the Covenant brings grace enough to pardon those who are most wicked; why then doth the Lord say to the wicked, *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant into thy mouth?* Observe what follows, and his meaning is expounded, *Seeing thou hatest to be reformed*; As if God had said, Thou wicked man, who protestest thy sin, and holdest it close, refusing to return, and hating to reform; what hast thou to do to meddle with my Covenant? *Lay off thy defiled hands. He that is resolved to hold his sin, takes hold of the Covenant in vain, or rather he lets it go, while he seems to hold it.* VVoe unto those who sue for mercy, while they neglect duty. Thus a wicked man labours in vain.

But there is a sense in which a wicked man doth not labour in vain, how wicked soever he is. VVhat else means the Prophets invitation (*Isa. 55. 5.*) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Let him forsake his wayes, and then no matter what his

wayes have been, let him return to the Lord, and then his former departures shall not hinder acceptance. *Christ died for the ungodly, Rom. 5. 6. and God justifieth the ungodly, Rom. 4. 5.* It is not in vain for an ungodly man to come to God indeed, and when he doth, he ceases to be ungodly. They draw nigh only with their lips, whose hearts are not changed, and they draw nigh in vain. *As God hath not said to the seed of Jacob (real Saints) Seek ye me in vain.* So he hath not said in vain to wicked men, *Seek ye my face.* For with the word which bids them seek, he gives them power to seek, and the mercy they seek for. The grace of God prevents us, that we may seek him, and blesses us when we do seek him. If all who are wicked labour in vain, then all had laboured in vain, forasmuch as all were wicked.

*Si adhuc mecum
agit Deus tan-
quam cum im-
pio, quo sum
frustra labo-
rem? Philip.
Hæc sunt ver-
ba hominis à
Deo derelicti.
Vatabl.*

Thirdly, You may take the meaning of it thus, *If I am wicked*; that is, if I am reputed by men, and still afflicted by God, as a wicked man, then why should I labour in vain, or trouble my self any further to so little purpose? If this sence may be admitted 'tis a passionate speech proceeding from impatience and distempe, of spirit: Much like that of David, and very near it in words, *Psal. 73. 13. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency, for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. Davids afflictions wrought as hard conclusions in him, as Jobs did. Grace acts and speaks ever like it self, but a gracious man doth not. David shewed there was vanity and remainders of defilement in his heart, by saying, I have cleansed my heart in vain. Mr. Broughton renders to this sence, I shall be holden as wicked, now why do I labour in vain? Hence observe,*

That where hope faileth, endeavour faileth too.

I have no hope, saith Job, to get out of these afflictions, which fall upon wicked men, or to get one step beyond a wicked man in your reputation, my labour is in vain, why then do I labour? When the heart sinks, the hands hang down. Where the one gives over believing, and hoping, the other gives over acting and working. Hence the afflicted are called upon by the Apostle, *to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees (Heb. 12. 12.)* Hands and knees are the instruments of action and motion; and the hanging down of these imports both retarded or stopt. Those afflicted Hebrews saw little or no hope of deliverance, therefore they gave over endeavouring and moving after deliverance.

Lastly,

Lastly, Taking the words (as in the original) absolutely, without any supposition, *I am wicked, Why then labour I in vain?* As if he had said, *I am wicked, not only in the opinion of men, but I acknowledge myself to be wicked indeed, considered with the most holy God;* and then his sence is, Lord, if thou art pleased to go this way to work with me, to set the rigour of thy justice awork, to find out my sin, and to judge me according to what thou findest, then in vain do I seek to comfort my self, for in thy sight no flesh can be justified, I (as well as others) *am wicked.* In which acknowledgment he seems to meet with, and confute that supposition of Bildad, Chap. 8. 6. *If thou wert pure; Pure, saith Job, alas, I can never be pure before God. When the Lord examines my purity, he will find it impurity. You tell me, if I were pure, the Lord would awaken for me, I shall never be pure in your sence, I am as pure as ever I shall be, that is, I am impure, and shall be at my best: which sence falleth in directly with the two verses following, Though I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloathes shall abhor me.* Taking up that interpretation, I shall connect it with these two verses, and open them in order.

Verse 30. *If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean;*

Washing is an act proper to the cleansing of the body, or of bodily things; and in Scripture-story we find that Travellers had water provided for them at their journeys end, to refresh and cool their bodies. These were civil washings. But besides these we find many ceremonial washings of the body, or bodily things, which implied the removing and taking away of sin, and so were a token of internal purification. Therefore the Apostle (Heb. 9. 10.) describing the Jewish worship, and shewing the several parts of it, saith, *It stood* (we supply that word, but it suits the Text well; for the substantials, the pillars upon which their worship stood, were shadows, consisting) *in meats and drinks, and divers washings.* In Allusion to which the Lord promises (Ezek. 36. 25.) *I will sprinkle you with clean water:* And the Apostle Peter speaks of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1. 2.) And Paul of the laver of regeneration, Tit. 3. 5. The Saints who came out of great tribulation, are said to have washed their

In vanum laborarem, si coram Deo justificare me tentarem, ut falso me hoc velle praesupponis.

In lego multae erant purificationes, quas Deus forte instituit, ut populum aliorum gentium talibus ceremoniis assuetum facilius adduceret ad cultum verum. Pined.

robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revel. 7. 14.) Sanctification, which is cleansing from the filth of sin, and justification, which is cleansing from the guilt of sin, are set forth by washing, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *But ye are washed.* Thus the Prophet counsels the polluted Jews (Isa. 1. 16.) *Wash you, make you clean;* which he expounds by a moral duty in the next words, *Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well.* It was usual among the Heathen to wash, as a sign of purification, especially before they went to worship their gods, or after they had defiled themselves with some grievous crime. One of the Poets gives them a reproof, *O ye who are so credulous, or easie of belief, to think that the bloody sin of murdering the bodies of other men, can be taken away by washing your own bodies.* They had a great opinion of a cleansing vertue in the sea, to which some think the Prophet Micah alludes (Chap. 7. 19.) *(He will cast all their sins into the depths of the Sea.)* The ancient Christians, using to wash before they prayed, shewed a little touch of Judaism, or of their old Gentilisme. Some have given this for one reason, why the Lord appointed so many washings among his people, that the Heathens might be the easier gained to the religion of the Jews, when they found somewhat symbolizing with their customs among them: which if it were so, yet it cannot bear out those, who have mixed Christian worship with Heathenish observations, thereby to facilitate their conversion. But doubtless Job had reference to those rites either of the Jews or Gentiles, when he said,

Though I wash my self with Snow-water.

Why with Snow-water? That is (say some) with the most pure water, with the clearest springing fountain water, or in the most crystal streams, not in the water of melted Snow, but in water like Snow for purity and orient clearness.

Others, Conceive it an allusion to that peculiar rite of those times, when they took Snow-water to wash with, rather than spring or river water, because that came from the Heavens, not from the Earth here below; and was therefore (in their opinion) more excellent in it's nature, because it had a more excellent original.

Thirdly, Job is thought to specify snow-water, because in those Countreyes the fountain or river-water was not pure, and therefore

*Antiquissimum
fuit uti balneo
aut co poris ab-
lutione, ad de-
tergendas ani-
mi sordes.*

*Ab nimium fa-
ciles, qui tristia
crimina cædr,
Fluminea tolli
posse putati a-
qua.*

*a Romani nolu-
erunt parri-
das nudos (sed
in culum insu-
tos) in flumen
abjicere, ne cum
delati essent in
mare, ipsum pol-
luerunt, quo cæ-
tera quæ viola-
ta sunt, expiari
putantur. Cic.
in Orat. pro
Rose.*

*b Christiani u-
ti orat. Tert.
de orat. c. 10.
Clem l. 8.
Coast. c. 88.*

*Aliqui ex lati-
nis legunt aqua
vivæ, et aqua
vivæ. Pined.*

fore they preſerved Snow, and took that water to waſh and cleanſe with. As the cuſtom ſtill is in thoſe places where good water is a rare commodity.

Or laſtly, He may ſay, *If I waſh in Snow-water*, becauſe he would expreſs the cleaneſt waſhing, ſuch as makes the body look like Snow, white and pure. *White as Snow* is a proverbial (Iſa. 1. 18.) for the moſt reſplendent witneſs. And we find in Scripture, a thing is ſaid to be waſhed with that, the likeneſs of which after waſhing it represents: Thus the Church glories in Chriſt, *That his eyes were as the eyes of a Dove by the Rivers of water waſhed with milk* (Cant. 5. 12) that is, his eyes were white as milk, after waſhing. So here, *Though I waſh myſelf with ſnow-water*, that is, though I waſh my ſelf, till I become as white and as pure as Snow, &c. We read a like phraſe (Pſal. 51. 9.) *Purge me with hyſop and I ſhall be clean*, in alluſion to the Levitical Law, which appointed the Prieſt to ſprinkle both things and perſons with a bunch of hyſop (Levit. 14. Numb. 19) So the Chaldee paraphraſe expounds the Pſalm, *Cleanſe me, as the Prieſts ſprinkling with hyſop cleanſed the people. Though I waſh myſelf with Snow-water.*

In Scriptura talibus aliquando dicitur lotus, qualium referro videtur ſimilitudinem. Sanct.

And make my hands never ſo clean.

The Hebrew text is very emphatical, *Though I waſh my hands in purity*; which ſome expreſs by that which is the instrument of purifying the hands, *Though I waſh my hands with ſope*; So Mr. Broughton, *Though I waſh my hands with waſh-balls*, to make my hands clean and ſweet. We Tranſlate, though not to the letter of the Hebrew, yet to the ſenſe, *Though I waſh my hands never ſo clean, yet, &c.*

As the former expreſſion referreth to internal holineſs: ſo this latter to external. The hands in Scripture note our outward works. Hands are the executive part, the instruments of action. *Your hands are full of blood*, Iſa. 1. that is, your actions are cruel and bloody: there is not only blood in your hearts, but in your hands too (Pſal. 26. 6.) *I will waſh my hands in innocency, ſo will I compaſs thine Altar*, that is, I will make all my outward converſation pure and holy. The Lord hath rewarded me according to the purity of my hands, (Pſal. 18. 20.) Again (Pſal. 73. 13.) *I have, in vain, waſhed my hands in innocency*, that is, I have lived innocently in vain. The Apoſtle James calls for the holineſs of the outward

outward man in the same Language, *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purifie your hearts, ye double-minded,* Chap. 4. 8.

Besides, It was usual to wash the hands as an emblem or token of innocency, and freedom from guilt. The law of *Moses* appointed, in case a man were slain, no man knowing how, that the Elders of the nearest City, should wash their hands over the Heifer that was offered in Sacrifice, saying, *Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it,* Deut. 21. 6, 7. So *Pilate*, when he would make it visible unto all the world (as he thought) that he was free from the blood of Christ, called for a basin of water to wash his hands: all the water in the Ocean could not wash *Pilats* conscience from the guilt of Christs blood, yet he called for a basin of water, and washed his hands, saying, *I am free from the blood of this just person, see ye to it.* So then, the meaning of *Job* is, *Though I be clean within and clean without,* though my heart be as clean, as washing can make my hands, though (as the Apostle taught long after) *I lift up pure hands in prayer, without wrath and doubting,* yet

Scio quod
quantumvis
diligentissimo
vitæ candorem
& morum inte-
gritatem com-
parare studeam
tamen non ideo
dolorum & po-
narum expers
sim. Pined.

Verse 31. *Thou shalt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.*

כחל

Tinxit, in tinxi-
it ita lavit ut
res non munde-
tur, sed tantum
attingat humo-
rem.
Futura apud
Hebræos sæpe
debitum indi-
cant.

The word which we translate *plung*, signifies a dipping or immersion, rather to die or stain, then to cleanse, *Ezek. 23. 15.*

There are two interpretations of these words, *Thou shalt plunge me in the ditch.*

They may be understood either, first thus, that, God would adjudge him sinful, notwithstanding all his purifyings: and so it answereth the expression of the latter clause of the former verses,

As if he had said, *Though I make my self as clean as clean can be, and thereupon judge my self never so clean, yet thou mayest account me unclean; yea the more I labour to justify my self in my cleanness, the more unclean mayst thou judge me to be; Yct, Thou wilt plunge me in the Ditch; For we are to understand the words, Thou wilt plunge me; not as of that which the Lord would do, but as of that which the Lord might justly do. As if he had said, Thou mightest have greater cause to plunge me in the ditch, when I am so fine and clean in mine own eyes, then before. When I think I have washed my self as white as Snow, thou mayest look upon me, as drawn thorow a dirty channel, or as wallowed in the mire. After all my cleansing and rinsing, and purifying, thy pure eyes*

eyes can easily see a sinner in me, and discover that I am polluted, though I am washed.

This phrase of plunging in a ditch, notes the greatest defilement, it imports a man all over defiled: The Jews say of a man that hath lost his credit, and is exceedingly blemished in his reputation, that he is *cast in the dirt, or thrown in the mire.*

Again, The word which we translate *ditch*, sometimes signifies corruption only (Psal. 16. 10.) *Thou wilt not suffer thine holy One to see corruption.* And secondly, it signifieth a pit digged and prepared, wherein dead and corrupting carcases are laid (Psal. 94. 13.) *Till the pit be digged for the wicked,* that is, till they be destroyed and put into the pit.

Besides, We learn from antiquity, that they had special pits or graves for offenders, who were *slain by the law* (as some speak) or cut off by the hand of justice; who being enemies to humane society while they lived, were not admitted society with the bodies of honest men, when they dyed. The Prophet *Isaiah* (Chap. 14. 18, 19, 20.) describing the ruine and ignominious down-fall of the King of *Babylon*, saith, *That all the Kings of the Nations, even all of them lye in glory, every one in his own house* (that is, in their Fathers sepulchres) *But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch: and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust throw with a sword, that goe down to the stones of the pit. Thou shalt not be joyn'd to them in burial.*

And hence to be cast into a ditch notes any great humbling or affliction, reproach or contumely.

We may take it here in either sense, *Thou wilt plunge me into filth and corruption*, or shew me to be filthy and corrupt, though I cleanse my self; or, *Thou wilt cast me into the greatest afflictions*, notwithstanding all my purifications. I shall give a note futing this last sense, at the close of the whole verse.

From the first, here observe,

They who would make themselves most holy, appear most unholy before God. Thoughts of our own purity, render us impure. We are never so black before God, as when we are whitest in our own eyes. We find the Pharisee (*Luk. 18.*) washing himself in *snow-water*, and making his hands very clean, he tells us that he had fasted and prayed, and given alms, and paid tithes (this is to wash our selves in snow-water, and to make our hands very clean) but the Lord plunged this Pharisee in the ditch, he cast him for a

Phraasis hebraea est, quas fama nominisq; nitor pollui dicitur. 1 bold.

—*mn*

Corruptio, introitus, illas igitur sordes intelligit, quas

affert squalida mors, me de merges in locum putredinis.

Varro. l. 4 de Ling. Lat.

*Est se excusare,
culpam abnegare
ve simulamenta
pietatis ostendere.*

wicked man. The poor Publican plunged himself in the ditch and judged himself fit to be thrown into the mire; but *he went home to his house justified, rather than the other.* The Lord tells his people (Jer. 2. 22.) *Though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much sope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me.* The speech is of the same importance in the letter with this of Job; yet there the holy Ghost rather intends an hypocritical washing by excusing or denying our sins; or (as some gloss that text) by shewing images or imaginations, fancies or forgeries of holiness. If thou shalt put thy self in these drosses of holiness, as if thou wert washed with nitre, and cleansed with much sope, yet thou canst not avoid mine eye, *For thine iniquity is marked before me,* I can see thy sin thorow all the dawblings and paintings, thorow thy deckings and coverings put upon it. Now as God sees iniquity thorow all the masks and coverings of hypocrites; so he can see spots thorow all the washings and cleantings of the most sincere. And if we wash our selves to justify our selves, our very washing is our defiling. *God will not only see, but mark their iniquity, who think they can put all their iniquity out of his sight.* And such shall be made so vile, that not only God, but their own clothes shall abhor them, as Job expresses himself in the next words.

Mine own clothes will abhor me.

We have the word at the eighth Chapter, verse 14. *Whose hope shall loath him,* which we render, *Whose hope shall be cut off.* Clothes may be taken either properly or figuratively. Taken properly, the words may import, first, his degradation from all former dignities. *I shall be deprived of all honour and estimation, and so the clothes which I wore in the dayes of my prosperity, will so much unbecome me, that they will abhor me.* Or secondly, Taken properly, they are conceived to be a circumlocution of death.

Thou wilt plunge me in the pit, that is, I shall die, and mine own clothes will abhor me. The dead are stript; garments doe not become a dead carcase. M. Broughtons paraphrase upon his own translation imitates this; *Mine own clothes shall loath me;* namely, saith he, *When I go naked to the grave, as though my clothes did loath me.*

Others understand it figuratively, *Mine own clothes shall abhor me*

me, that is, First, Those that are my dearest friends shall abhor me, thou wilt make them flee from me, who are as near to me, as the clothes on my back.

Or secondly, In a figure, *Mine own clothes*, that is, mine own works shall abhor me. Hypocrites are said to come in *sheeps-cloathing* (Mat. 7.) that is, doing the works of those who are sincere, appearing like them in practise. And when we are warned to *keep our garments* (Rev. 16. 15.) the meaning is, that we must keep faith and a good conscience in every act of our lives.

Thirdly, It may have respect to lepers, whose clothes did abhor them, because they wore some mark of difference upon their garments, shewing that they were to be shunned, and their company avoided.

But rather in generall, *Mine own clothes shall abhor me*, notes extream pollution. If I justify my self before God I shall be so unclean, that my clothes will be loth to touch me. We say of one that is very filthy, *A man would not touch him with a pair of tongs*. And it is usual in Scripture (to give you that rule for the understanding of this and other the like forms of speaking) when a matter is spoken of in a way of excess, that things insensible have sense, yea reason and understanding ascribed to them: abhorring, is an act beyond sense, it hath a mixture of reason and understanding; now to note his exceeding loathsomeness to God and man, who attempts to justify himself before God, the text saith, *His clothes* (which have neither life nor sense) *shall abhor him*. When the Pharisees, envying the acclamations which the multitude of Christs Disciples gave him at his entrance into *Jerusalem*, desired that he would rebuke and silence them: Christ answered, *I tell you, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out*, importing how just an occasion there was, why his name and glory should be lifted up; do ye think much that reasonable men speak? if these should hold their peace, the stones that have neither life nor sense would speak. Thus (Gen. 4. 10.) to note the foulness of *Cains sin*, and his cruelty towards his brother, God saith, *The earth hath opened her mouth to receive thy brothers blood from thy hand*, as if the earth had been sensibly affected with the cruelty of *Cain* towards his brother; thou wouldst not let his blood stay in his body, therefore the earth in kindness opened her mouth, and took in his blood from thy hand, and that cries up unto me. So here, I shall be so foul, that if my clothes had sense, life

*Tam si quid
ero ut ea qui
bus nullus est
sensus, tantum
squalorem sen-
tiri et abominari
videantur.*

*Ubi aliqua-
rum rerum ex-
cessus est, di-
cuntur aliquan-
do in Scripturis
sentire insen-
sibilia.
Sanct.*

Job summam
 iudicium ani-
 me per sum-
 mam iudicium
 corporis indigi-
 tot.
 Tam iudicium
 iudicio tuo dis-
 cederem, ut is
 corpore est for-
 didus quem ve-
 stes sue hor-
 ren. Coc.
 Quamvis ego
 mundus sum a
 culpa, tamen
 penis argu-
 lorum, et
 egritudinum
 sordibus et
 squalore obso-
 lescent.

and reason, and could dispose of their own actions, and set them-
 selves upon what body and limbs they pleased, surely they would
 put themselves off from my body, and never come on again, they
 would abhor me, I should be as filthy before God in soul, as he is
 in body, who must be washed before he is fit to have his clothes
 put on him: *As to be cloathed with shame, so to have our clothes*
ashamed of us, notes the greatest dishonour.

Lastly, This casting into the ditch, and the abhorring of his
 clothes, may refer to the continuance of his afflictions; though
 I should make my self never so pure, yet the Lord would cast me
 again into the ditch of affliction, he will put me into the pit of
 trouble, till (like a man drawn out of the mire) mine own cloaths
 abhor me, or make me an abhorring to all that see me. I know
 the Lord will make further tryal of me.

Hence note,

*God casts his servants again and again into the miery ditch, as re-
 finers cast gold again and again into the fiery furnace, to make them
 more pure.*

That which defiles the outward man, may be cleansing to the
 inward: and the abominable clothing of the body, may be a
 means to put the soul into the most handsome dress.

Secondly, Observe, That

*After purgings and cleansings, the Lord often goes on with fur-
 ther chastenings.*

Though I wash my self, &c. yet thou wilt cast me in the ditch,
 and mine own cloaths will abhor me. Yea, our purgings and clean-
 sings are sometimes so far from causing God to take off our affli-
 ctions, that they do but fit us for more affliction: For the Lord
 will not trust an impure spirit, or an heart defiled under many
 corruptions, under great afflictions. He therefore cleanses many,
 and makes them more holy, that they may be more fit to bear
 afflictions. No certain argument can be grounded upon this, that
 a man shall come out of affliction, because he is cleansed, for
 God chuses (in some cases) to afflict such most, who are most
 cleansed. The Lord hath as much service from us, while we
 suffer, as while we doe his will; passive obedience is higher
 and harder service then active, and an unclean heart is of the
 two (though it be fit for neither) more unfit for suffering then
 for doing. Therefore Job's friends could not groundedly affirm,
 that he should be delivered, if he were cleansed. Indeed if Gods
 thoughts

thoughts were like mans thoughts, or if he were tied by such rules as we, we might make such conclusions ; but (*Job* concludes) *He is not a man as we are.*

J O B, Chap. 9. Vers. 32, 33, &c.

For he is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.

Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

J O B doth two things in the close of this Chapter.

First, He again renounceth all thought or intendment of answering God by any worthiness or goodness in himself. A point he had often touched before, it being the grand objection which his friends brought against him, as if his spirit were heightened up to the presumption of a tryal or contest with God himself. *'Tis a duty to clear our selves most, where and in what we are most suspected.*

This he doth in the 32. and 33. verses.

He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.

Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

In which words *Job* offers two things, to assure them that he was far enough from such an engaging with God.

First, From the disparity of their condition (vers. 32.) *He is not a man as I am.* God is not like me, I am no match for God ; and I will not be so fool-hardy, as to contend with one, who is infinitely above me.

Secondly, Lest any should think, that though himself, hand to hand (as we speak) would not venture upon God, yet he might (possibly) get some friend or second, to interpose and umpire it between them, or determine whether Gods dealings with him were just and equal, or no : And so (though not alone; yet) by a friend, or a third party to them both, he would try out the matter. No (saith *Job* in the 33. verse) not so neither, as I alone

lone will not undertake him; ſo neither is there any Diſſem-
blant, that might lay his hand upon us both.

In the two laſt verſes *Job* makes a petition to the Lord, deſi-
ring a favourable condeſcention, that he would be pleaſed to a-
bate of the preſent height and extremity of his pain, and then he
hoped yet, that he might anſwer him, though he would not con-
tend with him; anſwer him in reference to his own integrity, a-
bout which his friends had charged and wounded him, though
not in reference to his own righteouſneſs, about which the Lord
might charge and condemn him, *Let him take his rod away from*
me, and let not his fear terrifie me, then would I ſpeak, and not fear
him, but it is not ſo with me. He concludes with the difference of
his ſtate, for what he deſired of God it might be: And he be-
gins with the difference of his perſon, from what God himſelf is.
It is not with me as I could wiſh, and God is not ſuch an one, nor
can be, as I am, and muſt be.

Verſe 32. *For he is not a man as I am, &c.*

He doth not ſay, God is not ſuch a man as I am, but God is
not a man as I am. One man may ſay unto another man, Thou art
not ſuch a man as I am: Every different degree or endowment
among men, may bear a man out in ſaying ſo, and pride will
prompt a man to ſay ſo, when he is not in degree better, but in
kind worſe then other men. Such was the language of the Pha-
riſee (*Luk 18. 11.*) *God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are, ex-*
tortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even as this Publican: yet no man
can ſay to another man, *Thou art not a man as I am.*

But ſeeing God is not a man at all, what is there in this aſſerti-
on of *Job*? *He is not a man as I am.*

The words import a double difference. Firſt, a difference in
qualification. Secondly, in nature: here *Job* chiefly intends the
difference of quality (which yet in God is his nature) that he
was not wiſe, and juſt, and holy, and pure as God.

Non tam effen-
tia ad effenti-
am, quam qua-
litate ad qua-
litate, i. e.
ſua ad divinam
puritate col-
latio fit et de-
notatur. Bold.

Moses in his ſong (*Exod. 15. 3.*) after the overthrow of the
Egyptians in the red ſea, ſpeaks thus, *The Lord is a man of War;*
that phraſe intends not a humane nature to God; when he ſaith,
God is a man of War, he meaneth only this, *God is a great War-*
riour. We call a *Ship of War*, *A man of War*. As a man of words
ſignifies an eloquent man, though with ſome only a talkative
man: So a man of War ſignifies a famous Warriour, or one train-
ed

ed up for War; in which sense Saul saith of Goliab, that he had been a man of War from his youth (1 Sam. 17. 33.) God is a great Warriour, the most Potent Commander; *the Generalissimo of all the Armies in Heaven and Earth, the Lord of hosts is his Name: He is a man of War*, though he is not a man.

Further, when Job saith, *He is not a man as I am*, he gives us the reason of all he had said before, especially of what he had said immediately before, *Though I wash my self with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch. For he is not a man as I am*; that is, though I by washing my self should think I were all white, and not a spot to be seen upon me (as hypocrites by covering themselves, think they are all hid, and not a sin to be found about them) yet he would throw me into the ditch again, as like to like, dirt to dirt, for he is not a man as I am, he hath other eyes, and thoughts, and wayes then creatures have.

Ratio est omnium superiorum, etsi justus sim, cum Deo tamen contendens pro fonte habeor, quia non est par utriusque nostrum conditio. Merc.

Secondly, As they contain a reason why the Lord would judge him impure, though he should wash himself with snow-water; so also, why the Lord would afflict him, though he should wash himself with snow-water, *He is not a man as I am*. As if he had said, should I see a man without spot or speck, without blame or fault, yet full of wounds and stripes, full of troubles and sorrows: should I see him afflicted, of whom I could not say he had sinned, it were beyond my reason. But though I cannot, yet the Lord can see reason to afflict a man in whom I see no iniquity. He knows why and wherefore, he may and doth cast them into the fire in whom I can see no dross. *He is not a man as I am*. God exceeds man in his actings, as much as he doth in his nature; as he is what man is not, so he can do what man cannot; *Every thing is in working, as it is in being*. God alwayes works like himself, and infinitely above man.

As to the present business, he works above man, chiefly in two things:

First, Man cannot justly commence a sute against, or contend with another man, except he be able to charge him with some wrong that he hath done him, or lay some crime to his charge.

Secondly, A human judge cannot condemn or cast a man, unless he first legally convict him of his crime. Thus it is with men in their judicall proceedings. He that contends must know some crime; and the Judge passes sentence as he sees the crime proved and

and make good against him; but *God is not a man*, he may proceed to judgement without an accusation, and he may give judgement before the crime be proved; *Job* was smitten without cause truly alledged, much less attested. God afflicts that grace may be proved, not because sin is proved, *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him.*

Answer him.

Respondere hoc loco, potest esse verbum forense.

It is a judiciary word, or answering in judgement; *To justify* is a *Law terme*, and *so is to answer*; one puts in his bill, and another his answer; some Courts proceed by bill and answer, If the Lord (saith *Job*) should put in his bill against me, I would not put in my answer, *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him.*

Or we may take the word [*Answer*] in general, for the returning of satisfaction to a question. If the Lord demand a reason or an account of me, I could not satisfy him. Many, who can give a reason of the hope that is in them, cannot give a reason of the sufferings which are upon them: But though they know no particular reason why they suffer, yet they believe it is not without reason. Some holy Martyrs have said to their cruel persecutors, urging them with sophisticall Questions, *We can dye, but we cannot dispute.* And so the Saints under the most difficult providences of God, are resolved to say, *We can die under them, but we will not dispute them.* *He is not a man that we should answer him in what he speaks or doth.*

Hence observe,

First, *The consideration, that God is above man, is enough to humble and silence man.*

No man is proud in the presence of another whom he thinks to be his better. The sight of great beauty keeps down pride of beauty, *Pride cannot live in the eye of that which is above the reason of it in our selves*: Yea, he that finds he is but equal or upon even ground with others, can hardly be proud of any thing in himself. While we suppose our gifts or knowledge, but like those of other men, we are not lifted up in the opinion of them. Now, If equality check pride, a thought of superiority must needs kill it. And if the common superiority of a man kills our pride, how much more doth the knowledge of that superexcellent superiority which is in God? Doth not the beauty and dig-

nity

nity of God, obscure the lustre and darken the beauty of all creatures? Is the shining of the Stars any thing, when the Sun appears? Much less is the holiness, strength, and goodness of man any thing, when the goodness, holiness and strength of God stand forth or appear: we must say we are nothing, when we see what God is. The sight of him, in whom nothing of our imperfections can be found, cannot but humble us in the sight of all our perfections. Hence, when the Lord would abase man, and extoll himself, he removes all of man from himself (*1 Sam. 15. 29.*) *God is not a man that he should repent;* Men are full of repentings, and that they are so, shews them to be men. There is a repentance which is a grace of God, and there is a repentance which is an infirmity in man. By the former, men turn to God from that sin, in which they were, or have done. By the latter, men turn both from God and man in what they promise or purpose, either to be or do. They are this day of one mind, and to morrow of another; to day they love, and to morrow they hate; now they will, and anon they will not. They are in and out, no man knows where to find them; but God is ever the same, he changes not. *Elibu* sends a challenge to all Teachers, in the Name of God, *Who teacheth like him?* (*Chap. 36. 22.*) God himself challengeth *Job* in his own name. (*Chap. 40. 9.*) *Hast thou an arm like God? Or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? To whom will you liken me* (saith God, when he would bring down the pride of the creature) *To whom will you liken me, and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be like?* (*Isa. 46. 5.*) Why do ye exalt your selves? Why have ye such high thoughts of your selves? Can ye find out any to compare with me? Or can ye make a parallel of me among all my creatures?

All the unevenness of man towards God, arises from presumptuous thoughts of his evenness with God. Take a taste in two or three particulars.

First, Man grows into a boldness of sinning against God: because he thinks God is but so holy as man is; he conceits that which sutes his spirit, sutes Gods Spirit also: This causeth him to do many things most unsutable to the Spirit of God (*Psal. 50. 18.*) *When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentest with him, and thou hast been partaker with the adulterer; thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit, &c. these things hast thou done.* And what encouraged or hardned him to do these things? The

next words give us an account of that, *Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thy self*; that is, thou didst frame conceptions of me according to the *Idea* of thine own brain, or the model of thine own heart. Thou wast well pleased with such filthiness and abominations, therefore thou didst conclude, I would not be displeased with them. The true reason why most men make nothing of evil, is, because they make God nothing in goodness (as to that point) beyond themselves; this doth not trouble our spirits, we see no hurt in what we do: Surely then God sees no hurt in it, neither is his Spirit troubled with our doings.

Secondly, Boldness in pleading with, and complaining against God, when he doth what likes not us, arises from thoughts that we are like him. None would quarrel at what God doth, in cutting out and proportioning their own estates to them: or in casting down the humble and meek; in exalting the proud and vile, if they did fully believe God had as much right and reason as they see he hath power to do what he doth: Man draws God into his own compass, and then wonders to find him work so out of compass. If I were as God, saith one, I would do thus and thus; surely, God is as I am, he hath such thoughts as I have, saith another, then why doth he thus? Till we have fully studied this point, *That God is not as we are*, we shall never rest fully satisfied in what God doth, if he doth what we would not.

Thirdly, Unbelief springs from the same muddy Fountain: unbelief of the power of God to deliver us, when we are in outward straits and dangers; and unbelief of the mercy of God to pardon us, when we are in spiritual straits and desertions. What's the reason why, when great dangers encompass us, we cannot believe deliverance? Do we not make God like to our selves? Do we not shorten his hand to our own measure, and think it cannot be done, because men cannot do it? And for mercy about the pardon of sin; man being awakened sees how he hath provoked God, sin stares upon his face, and he finds out many aggravations upon his sin: then he begins to collect thus, certainly if a man had so provoked his neighbour, he could never pardon or forgive him; Can then such sins as these be forgiven by God? Mans mercy cannot reach so high as this, therefore surely the mercies of God will not. We have a very gracious promise, backt with a caution to prevent these jealousies (*Isai. 55. 6, 7.*) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts,*
and

and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Now, as when God calls upon man to obey his will, and do his Commandments, he is apt to say, at least in his heart, the duties are too many, and the burdens too great to be born: So when the Lord calleth upon wicked men, the worst of wicked men, to repent or turn unto him, and he will abundantly pardon, or he will multiply to pardon (as it is in the original) they are ready to object, What? Pardon such as we are? We are too filthy and vile for washing. Surely, he will not pardon us. These mercies are too many for us, and these favours too great for us to receive. Well (saith God) I preconceive your conceits of me, ye are measuring me by your selves, ye think it cannot be done, because ye cannot do it; your hearts are too narrow to pass by so many, so great provocations, therefore ye say, mine is too narrow also. Do ye thus measure me the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? I would have you know, *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes, for as the heavens are higher then the earth, so are my wayes higher then your wayes and my thoughts then your thoughts,* Vers. 8, 9. As if he had said, Your thoughts are as much below my mercy, as your wayes were below my holiness. Cease then from doubting what I have promised, as I would have you cease from doing what I have forbidden. Your unbelief that I will not pardon your sin, dishonours me as much as your disobedience did in committing sin. Till we believe God is holy above us, we fear not to sin; and till we believe God is merciful above us, we cannot believe he will pardon our sin.

Thus we see how the lifting up of our selves in our thoughts to an equality, or to some similitude with God, or the drawing down of God to an equality, or some similitude with our selves, is the ground and cause of all our unequal carriage towards God, of our boldness in sinning, of our boldness in pleading with, and complaining against him, of our extreme unbelief in the point of deliverance from troubles, or of the pardon of our sins. Secondly, Observe,

There is no comparison between God and man.

He is not a man as I am. Man is like to man, face answers face, and heart answers heart, strength answers strength, and wit answers wit. *Solomon concludes this Eccles. 6. 10.) That which*

bath been, is named already, and it is know that it is man. A man is but a man, be he never so great in worldly wealth or honour: as he bears the name, so he hath the nature of man still; *Nor can he contend with him that is mightier then he, i. e. with God.* If he venture beyond his line, or move out of the sphere of his activity, if he would act more then a man, he shall quickly find that he is but man, *He cannot contend with him that is mightier then he.* Man was indeed made in the likeness of God, *Gen. 1. 27. In the Image of God created he him,* yet we must not say, God is like man, he is not in our image. God put some impressions of himself upon man, but he took no impressions of man upon himself. *He is not a man as I am.* He hath given us some of his own excellencies, but he hath not taken upon him any of our weaknesses. God hath honoured man to give him somewhat of himself, but God should dishonour himself to take any thing of man. Thus man is in the likeness of God: but God is not in the likeness of man: Take heed of such thoughts. *It is as dangerous to frame a likeness or a similitude of God to our hearts, as to frame a likeness or a similitude of God upon a wall, (Exod 15. 11.) Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the gods?* That is, there is none like unto thee: None amongst the gods, neither among those who are falsely called gods, the Idols of the Heathen, nor among those who are truly called gods (for God calls them so) the Angels in Heaven, and Magistrates here upon the Earth: among these truly called gods, there is none like the true God, much less is there any among the meer pure mortals, like unto the immortal God. *Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?* So (Mic. 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage. Who is a God like unto thee?* Not only is there no man that can pardon as God, but there is no God that can pardon like God, he puts it upon that, *Who is a God like unto thee?* Not as if he granted that there were any other gods besides the Lord, but to meet with the thoughts of men, with those sinful principles and conceits, which lodge in man, and make other gods. To say of God only this, *He is God,* is to say all; we cannot say more good of God, then to call him God; as we cannot say more evil of sin, then to call it sin; when we have called it sin, we have called it all. The Apostle (Rom. 7. 13.) puts that upon it, as the worst he could say of it, *Sin that it might appear sin.* We cannot

cannot represent it in a worse likeness then its own. All men say they sin, but *sin appears sin* to very few. And when the Apostle would put a disgraceful title or epithite upon sin, he invests it with its own name, *sinful sin*. Thus to the point in hand, we cannot call God more, then when we call him God. Nothing can be predicated of him better then himself. When God appears to be God, all excellency appears. All men (almost) acknowledge God, but God appears to very few. 'Tis but little of God that can be known: and there are not many who know that little; very many know but little of that little, and most know nothing of it at all.

Thus also to say that man is man, is proof and aggravation enough of his depraved condition (Hos. 6.7.) *They like men have transgressed the Covenant*, they have done like themselves. When we see men vain, and wicked, and sinful, and covetous, and earthly, we may say of them, they have done like men; and how wonderful and glorious things soever God doth, we can but say, *He hath done like God*.

As a consectary from the whole, take this caution, *If God is not a man as we are, then God must never be measured by the rule and line of man*. Man hath not line enough to measure God by. The Lord exceeds man in all; he is not only above mans infirmities, but he is above all his perfections. The Lord is not only not weak as man is weak, or unholy as man is unholy, but the Lord is not strong as man is strong, nor holy as man is holy, nor just as man is just, nor wise as man is wise: Then, man must not venture to judge of the wisdom of God by his own wisdom, or of the justice, holiness and strength of God, by his own strength, holiness and justice. Man is not able to measure God in any of his Attributes; and in three things especially, man should take heed of measuring God in his actions.

First, In the great work of election. In this man is very apt to be meddling, and to be measuring God by the line of natural reason, or of civil justice: the Apostles dispute beats down this presumption, *Rom. 9*. We read there how man begins to bustle and startle at that great conclusion (vers. 18.) *Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth*. If it be thus, saith he, if every mans state be peremptorily determined by the will of God, if he loves and hates before men have done either good or evil, *Why doth he find fault? for who hath resisted his will?* What need any trouble themselves about the way,

way, when their end is under an unmovable decree? Why should any strive to forsake evil and do good on earth, seeing it was resolved in Heaven what should become of them, before they had done either good or evil? Thus the pride and ignorance of man cavils at the decrees of God. But itay (saith the Apostle) *O man, who art thou that replyest against God!* He is not a man as thou art: he hath done what he hath done by verue of his just prerogative, and therefore he is not unjust in doing it. Besides, if ye will needs argue from reason, then see how common reason confutes this blasphemy, *Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?* What if God hath done thus, and what if he will do thus? What hast thou to do with it? Know thy place, and keep thy rank; art not thou clay in the hand of the Potter?

Secondly, Measure not God by your own line in his providential dispensations: He may have a method of his own in giving or taking away, in pulling down or building up, in wounding or healing, in abasing man, or in raising him, because all is his own. *He who hath a right to all, can wrong none, and he who possesses all, is debtor to none.*

Thirdly, Measure not God by your own line in the matter of your ordinary approvings: and that two wayes.

First, Do it not in your approving of things. And

Secondly, Do it not in your approving of persons. Take heed first of measuring God by your selves in your approving of things, as if because you approve it, therefore God surely doth. This misconceit hath been the cause of almost all, and almost all the cause of all the superstition, idolatry, and will-worship that ever was in the world. Man thinks God must needs like any thing which is done to his honour; hence because the adorning and adoring of images, bowing to altars, using of unwritten Ceremonies, are directed to the honour of God, therefore man concludes surely God likes them. Whereas nothing pleases God, but what himself appoints: he is never honoured, but when he is obeyed. As no man hath been his counsellour, to direct him what to do with us: So no man can be his counsellour, to direct him what to require of us. *Not that which we commend is approved, but that which the Lord commends.*

Secondly, Take heed of this in your approbation or estimation of persons, *Not he whom you commend is approved, but he whom the Lord*

Lord commends. We should judge of men as we believe God judges. Or (to come nearer) let no man think himself is approved of God, because he is approved by himself. *Many flatter themselves in their own eyes, till their iniquity is found to be hateful,* (*Psal. 36.2.*) Christ intimates this, speaking to the Pharisees, (*Luk. 16.15.*) *Ye are they that justify your selves, ye have high thoughts of your own worth, and glory in your own excellencies, and ye think God hath high thoughts of you, that he glories in you too ; but let me tell you, That which is highly esteemed amongst men, is an abomination in the sight of God.* We are the men, said the Pharisees, ours are excellent gifts, thus they admired and doted upon themselves : but the Lord found them out, and what they highly esteemed he abominated. Some write and subscribe their own letters testimonial, and can get no hand to them but their own. *Not he who commends himself is approved, but he whom the Lord commends ; such shall find, that their own good word would do them no good, He is not a man as they are. He, saith Job, is not a man as I am, that I should answer him.*

And we should come together in judgment.

It hath been shewed what judgment is, at the 19th. verse of this Chapter, and at the third verse of the eighth Chapter, therefore I shall not now stay upon it, only as to the matter in hand ; Judgment may be taken three wayes.

First, For pleading, which is but preparatory to judgment, the opening and arguing of the case or fact under trial.

Secondly, For the decision and determination of the case according to law, or the award of judgment.

Thirdly, For the inflicting and executing of the sentence according to the judgment awarded.

Here Job chiefly intends the first, *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment,* that is, that I should plead, argue and debate my matters with him before any other Judge. God and man cannot come together to be judged ; for all mankind must receive their judgment from God.

Or nearer the Hebrew (which suites the former clause better) *He is not a man as I am, that we should come alike to judgment ;* No, we should be very unlike, very unequally matched in judgment. Man and man, who are upon even terms in their nature, may yet

1 Disceptation
et mutuum

ἐλεγχῶν & rationum.

2 Juris definitio.

3 Executio ca.

stigationis & debiti. Merc.

Ut veniamus
pariter in iudicium.

be upon such uneven terms in their condition, that they cannot come alike to judgment. A poor man cannot grapple with a rich man, nor a mean man with the honourable. Now, if they who are of the same nature cannot come alike in judgment, because of a disparity in their condition; How shall they who differ not only in condition, but in nature? Can God and man? Can poor wretched and miserable man, come alike in judgment with the great and glorious God? and so the meaning of Job may be thus conceived, *If I had only a man (like myself) to deal with, then I would venture a trial with him, at any seat of judgment, or Court of Justice; but he is not a man as I am, much less such a man as I am. How shall I set my self with him to be judged, when as himself is the Judge of all, and is himself judged of none?*

Hence observe,

Man is not able to contend with God in judgment.

Who is like me, and who will appoint me the time (or (nearer the letter) who will convent me in judgment?) Who is that shepherd that will stand before me? Isa. 49.19: Man must come before God in judgment, *We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,* (2 Cor. 5.10.) None shall escape his Tribunal. But man cannot stand before God in judgment. The wicked cannot stand at all before him in judgment, because they stand upon their own bottom. The righteous dare not stand before him in judgment upon their own bottom; if they should, themselves and their cause would quickly fall together.

There are seven considerations which tell us, that we cannot come together, much less alike together with God in judgment.

1. He is of such strength, that none can wrest themselves out of his hand. No power can daunt him.

2. He is of such sincerity, that bribes cannot corrupt him, nor can gifts put out his eyes.

3. He is of such wisdom, that none can over-reach him, nor can our wit entangle him.

4. He is so knowing, that none of our sins and failings, no not the least of them, are secrets to, or hidden from him.

5. He is so holy, that he cannot bear with the least sin, and so just, that he cannot but punish it, unless he receive satisfaction for it,

6. He

6. He cannot be a party in judgment, for he is the ſupreme Judge, and there is no appealing from his ſentence.

7. He is the laſt, yea, an everlaſting Judge, and therefore there is no repealing of his ſentence. Who is able to contend with him, whom no power can daunt, no bribes corrupt, no wit over-reach, who knows all our ſins, and will ſpare none of them, from whoſe ſentence there is no appealing, and whoſe ſentence cannot be repealed? There is no Judge above God, therefore we cannot appeal from him; there is none to come after God, therefore what he hath judged cannot be repealed.

Job having thus waved and profeſſed againſt contending with God in judgment, proceedeth in the thirty third verſe, to ſhew that there is none to whom his caſe might be referred for arbitration. There are two wayes by which controversies are ended.

First, by the legal ſentence of the publick Judge.

Secondly, By the moderation of a private friend. This latter Job means, when he ſaith,

Verſe 33. *Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that can lay his hand upon us both.*

The Septuagint render theſe words as a wiſh, or as a prayer, O ^{Εἴθε ἦν ὁ με-} that there were a Dayes-man, or, a Mediatour betwixt God and me, ^{στῆς ἡμεῶν καὶ} that might lay his hand upon us both. But the original bears it clearly in the negative, ^{ἔστι γὰρ. Sept.}

Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us.

The word which we translate *Dayes-man*, cometh from a ^{מְדַבֵּר} root which ſignifieth to argue or reprove, and ſo ſome render it ^{יָכַח} here, *Neither is there any Arguer or Reprover*, none to ſet the matter right between God and me, none to ſtate the question between us, none to reprove the Lord, if I ſhould ſay, or if by the common rules of juſtice it ſhould appear he hath done me wrong. The word is uſed in that ſenſe (*Gen. 31. 24.*) where Jacob tells his uncle Laban, *The Lord rebuked thee yeſternight*; the Lord himſelf came as an umpire, as a Dayes-man betwixt Jacob and Laban, and rebuked Laban for his hard unjuſt thoughts of, and intentions concerning Jacob; *Take heed* (ſaith God) *thou ſpeak not unto Jacob either good or bad, that is, do not*
D d threaten

Arguers Heb.
Non eſt arguens inter nos
vel increpans.

threaten or perswade him to return, thou wilt repent it if thou doest. Thus also the Lord appeared, as a *Dayes-man* between his people of old, and the great ones of the world (*Psal. 105. 14.*) *He suffered no man to do them wrong, yea, he rebuked Kings for their sakes.* God is alwayes able to, and often doth interpose for, and vindicate his people from the oppressions of men. *'Tis costly meddling with the Saints. Kings may get a rebuke for it. Yea, Kings may smart, and Kingdoms shake for it.*

Per omnes interpretes hunc versum de Mediatore seu arbitro, quem jurisconsulti vocant sequestrem, intelligunt, quasi Job optasset ordinem judicium precedentem versiculo, mediatorum vero seu arbitrum hoc versu.

Ideo sequester appellatur quod ejus qui electus sit, utraq; pars fidem sequatur. Gel. 1. 2. c. 10. Sequester est qui errantibus medius intervenit, qui apud Græcos μῆτορ dicitur, apud quem pignora deponi solent a sequendo dictum, quod ejus fide utraq; pars sequatur. Isidor. 1. 10. Rymol.

What a *Dayes-man* is, is so plain and well known by the custom and usage of most places, that it needs little explication. We in our language sometimes call him an *Umpire*, sometimes an *Arbitrator*, sometimes a *Mediatour*, sometimes a *Referrer*; and in some Countreys with us, when a question arises between neighbours, concerning which they are unwilling to spend money and time in sutes of Law, they say, *We will refer it unto men*; which kind of speaking seems to allude to the title of Magistrates and Judges, whom the Scripture calleth gods; and when a business is brought before them, it may be said to be refer'd or put to God. In opposition to which, when it is taken up by the umpiridge of friends, it is said, *To be referred or put to men*. We in our English tongue, call such *Dayes-men*, either because they bestowed a dayes pains upon the ending of a business, or because they were obliged to end it by a set day, whereas Judges may take more liberty to themselves. Yet some of the *Greeks* express all mans judgment by this word, *Mans-day*, because certain dayes were appointed for judicature. The Apostle *Paul* uses the same phrase (*1 Cor. 4. 3.*) in opposition to the *Lords-day*, the great day of judgment, to which he there appeals, from all the dayes set for mans judgment in this world. The *Latins* call *Dayes-man*, *Sequestres*; and *Critiques* tell us, that as the *Dayes-man* is expressed by a word in the *Hebrew*, whose root signifies to rebuke, because a *Dayes-man* had power to rebuke and reprove him that had done the wrong: So he is called *Sequester* in the *Latine*, from a word which signifies to follow, because of a power committed to him, that which way soever he should state and determine the business between the parties, they were bound to follow, and submit to his award; or, because he was supposed a man of such wisdom, faithfulness and integrity, that both parties might safely follow him: Hence he was called *Sequester*, that is, one whom they must or might follow, and abide by his sentence. To

assur.

assure which the parties usually ingaged themselves under penalties (of valuable damage to the business in question) to stand to his arbitration.

There are five things (by which we may more distinctly understand *Jobs* meaning) belonging to a *Dayes-man*, or an *Umpire*.

1. He must be agreed upon and chosen by both parties; for unless he be accepted by both of them, he can have no power to determine for, or against either of them.

2. He must hear both sides speak, and alledge what they can for themselves, before he determines.

3. He must beat out the matter by interrogatories and questions; he must not stay upon the bare narrative of the persons.

4. He must have power to conclude and determine of the differences betwixt them.

5. Both parties must be bound, at least by promise, to stand to the determination which he shall make. Such a one is a *Dayes-man* among men: who is also called a *Compromiser*, and his work,

the *Compromising* of a matter, because as he is elected by the mutual consent, so confirmed by the mutual promise of those who are at variance, to reconcile them, and take up their differences.

Now, saith *Job*, as there is no judge, so there is no *Dayes-man* betwixt me and God.

*Talis judex
vocatur com-
promissarius,
quasi ex com-
promisso d liti-
gatoribus
sumpto.*

That might lay his hand upon us both.

Some understand the words [*upon us both*] of *Job* and his friends, *There is not a Dayes-man betwixt me and my friends*, not one that can judge and consider of my innocency and their charges; as if he had said, *I though I will not plead it out with God, yet I dare refer the controversie betwixt you and me to an equal Umpire, I dare go to the trial of my innocency with you, but I see no Dayes-man; you are all parties in the business, and I know of none that will stand between us indifferently and unprejudiced.*

But the text refers clearly to God, *There is no Dayes-man*, none to arbitrate the matter between God and me, *None to lay his hands upon us both.*

To lay on hands is diversly used in Scripture. The hand signifies all power: Hence, to lay the hands, is to put forth power: and to do so, is taken sometimes in an ill sense, and sometimes in a good sense.

First, In an ill sense, and so to lay the hands, is to strike or smite even to death, *Gen. 22. 12. Lay not thine hand upon the child, upon Isaac*, that is, do not slay him. We have the same expression (*Gen. 37. 22.*) when *Reuben* pleaded for *Joseph* that he should not be murdered, *Shed no bloud, but cast him into this pit, and lay no hand upon him*; that is, do not destroy him. This laying on of the hands, notes any violent act, either proceeding from holy zeal or justice, as in *Nehemiah*, who threatens the profaners of the Sabbath, *If ye do so again I will lay hands on you*; or from malice, as in the chief Priests, *who sought to lay hands on Christ the Lord of the Sabbath* (*Luk 20. 19.*) And Christ prophesying what the condition of his Disciples and of believers should be, what usage they should find in the world, tells them (*Mat. 21. 12.*) *They shall lay their hands upon you, and persecute you.* Thus *Haman* thought scorn to lay his hands on *Mordecai* alone (*Esth. 3. 6.*) He had a design to take revenge upon the whole Nation of the Jews.

Secondly, To lay on the hands is taken in a good sense; and so I find it used three wayes.

1. In benedictions, *Mark 10. 16. Christ took up the young children in his arms, and laid his hands upon them, and blessed them.* As under the Law, *Levit. 1. 4.* and *Chap. 4. 15.* The people or the Elders laying their hands upon the beast, which was to be offered in Sacrifice, intimated the laying of all their sins by faith upon Christ, of whom that Sacrifice was a type. So Christs laying his hands upon those children, implied the bestowing and pouring out of mercy upon them, in the pardoning of their sins, and the furnishing of them with the graces of his Spirit. The same action used by the Apostles in the name of Christ, had the same signification and effect. When *Peter* and *John* came to *Samaria*, and saw what work the Word had made among that people, *They laid their hands on them, and they received the holy Ghost*, *Act. 8. 17.* *Paul* likewise laid his hands on the Disciples at *Ephesus*, and they received the holy Ghost, *Act. 19. 6.* It was used also as a sign of healing, *Mark 16. 18. They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover*: And (*Mat. 9. 18.*) the Ruler saith unto Christ, *My daughter is sick, but come and lay thine hands on her, and she shall be healed.* Some interpret the Rulers desire of this sign, to be as a sign he had faith, so also that his faith was weak. The Centurion (concerning whom Christ testified, *I have not found*

found so great faith, no not in Israel) desired Christ but to speak the word only, and his servant should be healed (Mat. 8.8.) As a word is the proper object of faith, so faith acts most properly, when it rests and lives upon a word only. Signs are mercies to the weak, and they are witnesses of our weakness. Signs are but crutches and spectacles to help the lameness and dim-sightedness of faith. But to our text.

2. Laying on of hands was used in the ordination or solemn setting of a man apart unto an office. The children of Israel, that is, some of the chief of them (under the Ceremonial Law) laid their hands upon the Levites, Num. 8. 10. which was either a testification that they gave up all carnal and worldly interests in them, and bequeathed them wholly unto God, or an approbation of their office, and of the Levites ministrations in it on their behalf. The same Ceremony (for the matter) was continued in the sending forth of Gospel-officers. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, was Pauls counsel to Timothy, in reference to himself (1 Tim. 4. 14.) And in reference to others (1 Tim. 5. 22.) Lay hands suddenly on no man. And Paul and Barnabas being immediately designed by God for a special work of the Ministry, to which they were called before, were sent away with fasting and prayer, and the laying on of hands, Act. 13. 3

3 The hand specially signifies civil power, Pla. 89. 25. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right-hand in the floods; that is, I will give him power over them who dwell by the seas. And then, Laying on of hands, implies the authority which one man hath over another to determine or resolve a case, or to settle a business between them, and that is the intendment of it here, There is no Dayes-man that might lay his hand upon us both; that is, who may authoritatively decide and make an end of this controversie. To impose the hand was to compose the difference. I find a threefold posture of the Dayes-man observed in the action of his hand.

First, He put forth his hand towards the parties, desiring them to joyn hands, or (as we speak) to shake hands and be friends. Joyning hands signifies consent (Exod. 27. 1.) Thou shalt not put thy hand with the wicked; that is, thou shalt make no agreement with him. Some of the Ancients describe the Pacifisator or Dayes-man, having his hands closed into the hands of those between whom he was to make peace: Hence they who are un-

faithful

Impositio manuum potestatis signum, qd. qui utrumque nostrum valet manu imposita coercere.

Merc. Ponere manum, est litem componere & controversie auctores ad sedis concordiamque adducere.

Pacifisatoris effigies describitur ad alterutrum litigantium manum alternatim extendens, ut junctis dextris pacis sedis iniretur. Quintil.

Quibus nulla
federali servati
fides mendacem
dextram habere
dicuntur.

Cum quadam
attentione, studio
& industria ponere
Arbitrum medium
inter litigantes
benigne manum nunc
super hanc
nunc super
illam ponere
solebat, dicens,
Tum hoc hallucinari
tu vero bene egisti sed
hoc & hoc
lacerare non debes.
BOLD.

faithful in Covenant, are said to have a *lying* or a *deceitful right-hand*. The Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of a false worshipper, who had engaged his faith to serve Idols, concludes, *He feedeth of ashes, a deceived heart hath turned him aside that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right-hand?* (Isa. 44. 20.) or (as others translate) *Is there not a lie at my right-hand?* noting, that the Idol to which he had given his heart and hand, would deceive him most when he trusted most to it.

Secondly, The *Dayes-man* eying the temper or distemper, both of the complainant and defendant, laid his hand gently now upon one, and then upon another, using his best Rhetorick to persuade, yea to conjure them to peace and quietness; Sir, said he, 'O one, I beseech you to accept of these terms and conditions, 'tis you that have done the wrong, and trespassed against your neighbour; and presently he bespake the other, that he would pass by the offence, heal the breach, forget the injury, or take reasonable satisfaction for his damage.

Thirdly, The *Dayes-man* giving sentence, laid his hand upon the head of him whom he found faulty, and to have done the wrong, in token of condemnation. Among the Ceremonies of consecrating the Levitical Priests, this is given in command, (Exod. 29. 10.) *Thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the Tabernacle of the Congregation: and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock:* And in the rules given concerning the burnt offerings of the people, it is directed, that the bringer shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering, &c. (Levit. 1. 4.) Now this laying of their hands upon the head of the Sacrifice, implied the laying of their sins upon the head of the Sacrifice, and that, the laying of their sins upon the head of Christ, on whom the Prophet assures us, *The Lord laid the iniquity of us all* (Isa. 53. 6.) And as the laying on of the hand upon the head of the beast transferr'd their sins upon him, so likewise that sentence of death and condemnation which was due to their sin, and was presently executed by slaying of the beast: which was a lively type of Christ (the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world) dying under a sentence of condemnation in the stead of sinners.

Lastly, The laying on of the hand, notes the keeping of the parties in compass, for contenders use to be very violent one against another.

Thus

Thus to the present text, The laying on of the hand signifies only the composing or compounding of a difference. When Job complained or affirmed only, *There is no Dayes-man betwixt us*; his meaning was, that there was no man who could take up the matter betwixt God and him, there was none such to be found, for he speaks not only (*De facto*) that there was no *Dayes-man*, but (*de impossibili*) as of a thing which was impossible to be; As if he had said, *I would gladly refer this matter to arbitration, but the Lord, who is engaged with me, is above the arbitration of men or Angels; Creatures may not meddle with any of his matters further then they are called and I know not of any whom God hath called to, or appointed over this matter.*

Hence observe,

First, *When controversies arise, the rule of love bids us refer our differences to the determination of brethren.*

Job speaks according to the usage of those dayes; men did not presently run to law, and call one another before the Judge, they had *Dayes-men* and *Umpires* to determine matters between them. Thus Jacob bespeaks Laban (Gen. 31. 37.) *Whereas thou hast search'd all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.* The Apostle (1 Cor. 6. 1, 5.) is very angry with the *Corinthians*, because they were so hasty to go to Law, *Verily there is utterly a fault among you, because you go to law one with another; What! is there not a Dayes-man among you? Is there not a man among you fit to be an Arbitrator? I speak to your shame (saith Paul) Is it so that there is not a wise man among you, no nor one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.* The sin of these *Corinthians* was the greater, because the Judges were *Heathen*, yet such contentings bear a proportion of sinfulness, though Judges be *Christians*. To bring every matter to the judgment seat, when (possibly) a brother or a friend might take up the matter, is a transgression against the law of love. We should rather labour after reconcilements, then sutes in Law, which are a cause, not only of trouble and expence, but of great breaches and heart-burnings among friends and brethren. We have a proverbial speech among us, *A lean Arbitration is better then a fat Judgment.* It is better to the parties, they shall get more by it, the charge of obtaining right by law, many times eat-

Non potest dera
Deo mihi que si-
mul litiganti-
bus arbitror:
quasi in Deum
æque ac in me
potestatem ex-
ercendo.

In proverbio
est potiores esse
iniquas pacis
conditiones
optima iudici-
um sententia

ing out all, and sometimes more then all, alwayes a considerable part of that which the Law gives us as our right. We use to say to dissenters, *Be friends, the Law is costly.* 'Tis very costly to most mens purses, and to some mens consciences. *'Tis rare, if a man wrongs not his soul by seeking the rights of his credit or estate.*

Secondly observe, *That no creature can umpire the business betwixt God and man.*

There is a two-fold reason of it.

*Oportet ut in
iudice sit altior
s. pientia, quæ
sit qua regula,
ad quam exami-
nantur diſta
utriusque par-
tis.*

First, He that is our Umpire is supposed wiser then our selves. They who cannot agree need more wisdom then their own to work their agreement. But there is no creature wise as God, yea, there is no creature wise but God; who is therefore called, *The God only wise.* God is best able to judge of his own actions. No man hath been his Counsellour (Rom. 11. 34.) much less shall any man be his Judge: Men sometimes abound too much in their own sense, but God must abound in his. His will is the rule of all, much more his wisdom; or rather his wisdom is the rule of all, because his will is; his will and wisdom being the same, and of the same extent, both infinite.

*Oportet ut in
iudice sit major
potestas, quæ
possit utramque
partem compri-
mere.*

Secondly, He that is a *Dayes-man* or *Umpire*, must (according to the rules before spoken of) have power to compel the parties to submit or stand to what he shall determine. But as we cannot lay any restraint upon God, from doing what he will; so we cannot lay any constraint upon him, to do what we will. Who shall force the Lord? To whom hath he given an *Assumpsit*, or engaged himself under a penalty to perform what he shall award? The Lord doth whatsoever he pleaseth both in heaven and earth, and he will do no more then he pleaseth. Perswasion cannot move him, much less can power compel him. He that is above all in power, cannot be dealt with any way, but by perswasion. And he who is above all in wisdom, cannot be perswaded by any against his own will.

There is indeed a *Dayes man* betwixt God and man, but God himself hath appointed him. God hath referred the differences betwixt himself and man unto *Jesus Christ*; and (his own good will and free grace moving him thereunto) he stands engaged in the bonds of his everlasting truth and faithfulness to perform what *Jesus Christ*, as Mediatour, should ask for us: unto him we may safely commit our cause and our souls, with that assurance of the

Apostle

Apostle (2 Tim. 1. 12.) *I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* Christ, God-man, is Umpire between God and man; what we trust him with shall not miscarry: he will make our cause good, and our persons acceptable before God at that great day. It is infinite mercy, when we were neither able to manage our own cause, nor to find out any in heaven or earth who could, that then God himself should find out one, in wisdom and power like himself, one who *thought it no robbery to be equal with God* to be our *Dayes-man*. Many of the Ancients interpret this Text, either as *Jobs* desire and prayer, that Christ would come in the flesh, *O that there were a Dayes-man betwixt us*: or as a prophecy of Jesus Christ, to come as our *Dayes-man* in the flesh, *There is no Dayes-man yet, but a Dayes-man shall come.* The sense is pious, but the context will not bear it; in the 16th. Chapter, v. 21. and chap. 17. v. 3. We shall find *Job* speaking clearly of the Mediatour Jesus Christ, and of his great work of atonement between God and man. But here he seems to keep to the present controversy, about the business of affliction, not of salvation.

Take two or three consuetaries flowing from the whole matter.

First, *Job* at the lowest speaks highly of God, and humbly of himself. *The greater his afflictions were the purer was his language.* He was not able to grapple with God, and there was none to be found who could umpire the matter betwixt them. *The will of God is the supreme law.* What he will do with us, we must be content he should. The secrets of his providence are beyond our search, and his judgments above our reach.

Secondly, *The greatness and transcendency of God should keep us low in our own thoughts.*

Our knowledge of God is the present cure of our own pride. The knowledge of God causeth us to know our selves, and that which makes us know our selves, cannot but make us low in our selves. Though a proud man is commonly said, *To know himself too much*, yet the truth is, he doth not know himself enough, no, nor at all, as he should know himself. *Many are proud of, and with their knowledge, yet pride is the daughter of ignorance.* Some pride lodges in every mans heart, because more then some ignorance doth. *Job* had some of both in his; why doth he lay the thought of the infinite glory and sovereignty of God so often to

his heart, but to keep down or to cure the swellings of his heart.

Thirdly, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God.*

He is not a man as we are (we are not able to match him) and *there is* (among men) *no Dayes-man betwixt us.* David made it his election (2 Sam. 24.) *To fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of man.* And it is best for us to fall into the hands of God (as David put himself into his hands) with respect to his great mercies. But woe unto us, if we fall into his hands, as contenders with his great power. Shall we thus provoke the Lord? Are we stronger then he? It is our duty, when we do, and our priviledge that we may, cast our selves into the hands of God, when the hand of man oppresses us; for (as one of the Ancients speaks sweetly and feelingly) *If thou doest deposit thy injuries with him, he is able to revenge thee; if thy losses, he is able to repair thee; if thy sickness, he is able to heal thee; and if thy death, he can raise thee up and estate thee in life again.* Thus (I say, it is best to fall into the hands of God, in expectation of mercy, through the Mediatour, but it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, upon contempt of mercy obtained by the Mediatour: So the Apostle argues (Heb. 10. 26.) *If men sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, &c.* Thence concluding, (vers. 31.) *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* They who sleight the blood of Christ, and neglect the great salvation tendered to sinners by him, can have no more sacrifice for sin. Wicked men crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame, Heb. 6. 6. But God will not crucifie his Son, or put him to open shame again for them. God will not make another Gospel for them (as he must, if they be saved) who contemn this. No, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, these men who once (with all mankind) fell into the hands of God by transgressing his Law, are now (under another notion) fallen into his hands, even by the contempt of his Gospel; and now God saith, *I will deal with them alone, for they have refused the Dayes-man whom I sent, and who was ready to lay his hand upon us both.* It had been unconceivably sad with us all, if, as in the case of *Jobs* temporal lost estate, there was no *Dayes-man* between God and him on earth, so in the case of our spiritual lost estate, there had been

Satis idoneus est patientia sequester Deus, si injuriam deposuerit iuxta eum, ultor est; si damnum, restitutor; si dolorem, medicus; si mortem, resuscitator est.
Tertul. l. de Patient.

no *Dayes-man* between God and man in Heaven : But it will be unconceivably more ſad with thoſe, who having had the tender of ſuch a *Dayes-man*, ſhall be found contemnors of him. Greateſt love neglected, breaketh forth and ends in greateſt wrath.

שֶׁבֶט
baculus vel
virga ad per-
cutiendum
מַשְׁעָן
Virga vel ba-
culus ad ſu-
ſtentandum.

J O B Chap. 9. Verſ. 34, 35.

Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me.

Then would I ſpeak, and not fear him, but it is not ſo with me.

WE have ſhewed (in the two former verſes) Job renouncing and proteſting againſt all thought of contending at all with God ; He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould answer him, &c. In theſe two he deſireth God not to contend with him : as if he had ſaid, Lord, I will not plead or diſpute with thee ; and I know (ſuch is thy ſoveraignty) thou mayeſt do what thou pleaſeſt with me ; Yet, oh that thou wouldeſt be pleaſed to abate of the ſeverity of thy proceeding, and to remit the fierceneſſ of that wrath, wherein thou appeareſt againſt me, that I might have liberty to ſpread my condition in thy preſence. I have no friend to take up the matter for me ; but I would open my caſe in a few words myſelf, if I might obtain a ceſſation, but for the time of treaty, if thou wouldeſt forbear fighting, while I am ſpeaking. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me. Then would I ſpeak, &c.

Nihil aliud
poſtulat Job,
quam ut Deus
vel mitigaret,
vel penitus
auferret ab eo
flagella, ſc.
morbos & do-
lores.
Non agat pro
jure, ſed gra-
tia & moda-
rationi faciat
locum. Coc.

Let him take his rod away from me.

The rod hath divers acceptions. The word *Shabet* in the Hebrew, is taken ſometimes ſtrictly for a branch, bough or ſprig, growing forth from the ſtock of a tree : and becauſe a rod or a ſtaff is made of the branch of a tree, therefore the ſame word ſignifies both.

Secondly, It ſignifies a *Scepter* ; the Scepter of a King, which emblems the power of a King. *Abasuerus* held forth his golden Scepter to Queen *Eſther*, in token of acceptance (*Eſth.* 5. 2) And becauſe in ancient times (as the learned obſerve) they

were wont to make Scepters of such rods, and all Scepters have the form or shape of a rod, therefore the original expresses the rod and the Scepter by the same word. (Gen. 49.10.) *The Scepter [Shebet, the rod] shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his feet. Thy Scepter, O God, is a Scepter of righteousness* (Psal. 45. 6:) that is, thou usest thy Scepter righteously. The Scepter notes two things. 1. Authority to judge or command. 2. Power to correct or punish; both are included in that prophecy of the Kingdom of Christ (Psal. 110.2.) *The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Sion*; that is, he shall invest thee with power to govern, as the next words expound it, *Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies*. Commanders in war direct with a rod or leading-staffe; and Magistrates punish with a rod in times of peace.

Hence thirdly, By a Metonymy the Scepter imports dominion, rule and government it self, Amos. 1. 8. *I will cut off him that holdeth the Scepter*, that is, who hath the government in his hand.

Fourthly, The word is often used in Scripture to signify a Tribe, or a family of persons, because a tribe is as a branch sprung from one stock; so the twelve Tribes of Israel (like twelve branches) sprung from that great and ancient stock, the Patriarch Jacob.

Lastly, The word signifies punishment or correction; correction is often given with a rod, therefore *to be under the rod is to be under punishment*. Thus the Lord threatens to visit the transgression of the house of David with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes, Psal. 89. 32. *The rod and reproof give wisdom* (Prov. 29. 15.) The rod hath a voice, *Hear the rod* (saith the Prophet, Mic. 6. 9.) but 'tis best when a voice is joyned with the rod, and instruction mixed with correction.

There are in the Hebrew (to note that by the way) five words, which signify a rod or a staff. Some resolve that seeming contradiction which is in the two Evangelists, *Matthew* and *Mark*, by the different signification of these words. When Christ (Matth. 10. 10. as also, Luke 9. 3.) sent forth his Apostles to preach the Gospel, among other instructions and directions given them for their journey, this is one, *Take no staves*. But (Mar. 6. 8.) *Christ commanded them that they should take nothing for their journey, save a staff only*. One Evangelist saith, they must not take staves, and in the other they are bidden to take staves. Now (say these) in *Matthew* and *Luke*, where he forbids his Disciples

*Satis idoneus
est patientiae
sequester De-
us, si injuriam
disposuerit
juxta eum, ul-
tor est; si
damnum, resti-
tutor; si dolo-
rem, medicus;
et mortem, re-
suscitator est.*
Tertul. l. de
Patient.

Disciples to take staves, he expresseth himself by the word in the text, *Shebet*, which signifies a correcting or smiting staff: Take no staves to smite and strike with, ye go out with a message of peace in your mouths, let there not be so much as an instrument of contention in your hands. But in *Mark* he useth the word *Mis-nan*, which signifies a staff to lean upon, Take a staff to rest or ease your selves upon, or to help your selves on in your travel, *A walking staff, but not a striking staff*. Thus they reconcile the difference. But though this interpretation be good, yet this ground of it appears not, either in the Syriack, which in both texts hath the word *Shebet*, or in the Greek, which expresses both by (*εὐσταθ* :) So then we must rather say, that the same word signifies a staff for both uses, and that when Christ forbids his Disciples a staff, he means a staff to strike with (*Preachers must be no strikers*, according to the Apostles rule in *Timothy*) and that when he bids them take a staff, he means a walking staff. *Itenerint Preachers might be wearied with travelling, as well as with speaking.*

But to the Text. The rod which *Job* desires might be removed, is, That sore affliction which the sovereign power of God laid upon him, and exercised him with. As if he had said, Lord, thou dealest with me upon the height of thy prerogative, and I acknowledge thou mayest do so: But my humble sute and prayer is, that thou wouldest afflict me less then thou hast, though thou hast not afflicted me more then thou mayest. Thou hast not injured me at all, but O that thou wouldest relieve me.

He speaks to this sense with a little variety of words (Chap. 13. 20, 21.) Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide myself from thee; withdraw thine hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid. And in a language not unlike this, he describes the peace and prosperity of wicked men (Chap. 21. 9.) Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. We find also that *Elibu* (who undertook *Job*, and debated the matter with him, when these three had no more to say, or would say no more.) He, I say, perceiving what it was which *Job* had complained of as an impediment of speaking unto God, promises that himself would give him no such impediment or cause of complaint (Chap. 33. 7.) Behold, my terrour shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee; As if he had said, The Lords hand hath been heavy upon thee, and his

שֶׁבֶט
baculus vel
virga ad per-
cutiendum
מִשְׁנָן
Virga vel ba-
culus ad su-
stentandum.

Nihil aliud
postulat Iob,
quam ut Deus
vel mitigaret,
vel penitus
auferret ab eo
flagella, sc.
morbos & do-
lores.
Non agat pro-
pore, sed gra-
tia & moder-
ationi faciat
locum. Coc.

terrou

terroure hath made thee afraid, but (take my word) I will deal gently and mildly with thee, *My terrour shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee.* So that *Jobs* desire is only this, That he might have ease or release from his present sorrows. And 'tis (not improbably) conceived, that he alludes to the custom of the Judges in those Eastern Countries, who laid a rod upon some offenders in token of condemnation, and took it off from others in token of absolution, of grace and favour. *Take thy rod away from me.*

Affliction is called a rod in a three-fold consideration.

1. Because of the smart of it. *Afflictions are grievous and painful to flesh and blood.* They grieve and pain the outward man, while the inward man takes pleasure in them. I (saith Paul) *take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in persecutions, in necessities, in distresses for Christs sake* (2 Cor. 12. 10.) that is, my spirit doth, for no affliction (not that for Christs sake) is joyous for the present, but grievous to the flesh. For, as the Spirit would not do those evils of sin, which the flesh would and doth, (*The evil which I would not, that I do*, was Pauls cry, Rom. 7. 19.) So the flesh would not endure those evils of sorrow, which the Spirit would and doth. And as a believer delights in the Law of God, after the inward man, when corruption is vexed and troubled at it; so a believer delights in the rod of God, after the inward man, when corruption is most impatient and unquiet under it. Hence the Apostles counsel to the dispersed Jews, *Rejoyce when ye fall into divers temptations* (Jam. 1.) that is, into divers afflictions; the flesh hath its sense, and feels smart; but the Spirit is armed with faith, which overcomes the smart. Affliction were not so much as a rod, if it did not make us smart; and we are not so much as Christians, if we cannot bear the smart with patience, or overcome it with faith.

2. Affliction is called a Rod, in regard of the hand that useth it. A sword is in the hand of a Judge, and a Rod in the hand of a father. God deals with his people as a father with his children in afflicting them. When we most provoke his fatherly displeasure against us, he doth not wish (as *Balaam* when his Ass offended him) that there were a sword in his hand to slay us; he only takes up a rod to scourge us. Hence.

3. Affliction is called a rod, in regard of the end for which it is sent. A rod is not prepared to kill, nor is it an instrument of cruelty,

cruelty. A rod is not for destruction, but for correction. There are indeed destroying rods, which God will destroy, and save his people who are destroyed by them, *I will destroy the rod of the oppressour* (Isa. 9. 4.) *Nebuchadnezzar the rod of Gods anger*, was a destroying rod, yet they among the Jews, who feared God, were only corrected, while they were destroyed. *The Lord means no hurt to those who are good, when he makes them smart and die under the rod of those who are evil.* If ever any man might think he had a sword in his bowels, rather than a rod upon his back, *Job* might, yet even he calls it a rod, while he calls to God for the removing of it, *Remove thy rod away from me:* And seeing he calls to have it removed, we may observe,

That it is lawful for to pray against affliction.

We may pray to be eased of that, which we must be patient under. To be discontented with affliction is sinful, but it is no sin (it is a duty) to desire the taking of it away. For

1. We may pray for the preventing of afflictions, therefore we may pray for the removing of afflictions, we may pray, *Lord, keep thy rod off from us;* therefore we may pray, *Lord, take thy rod off from us.*

2. Afflictions themselves are evil. There is no good in them, nor can they do us any good of themselves. The good cometh from a superiour work, from those admirable influences and concurrences of God upon, and with corrections. The rod is an evil in it self, and will make us worse, unless the Lord make it a blessing to us. Some are stubborn under the rod: and their hearts are hardened, while themselves are melted in the fire of affliction. As man lives not by bread alone: So man mends not by the rod alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 'Tis little less than a miracle that this dry rod (as that of *Aaron* did natural) should blossom and bring forth spiritual fruit, the fruits of righteousness.

3. We may pray for the removing of afflictions, because the Lord often sends afflictions upon this message, to bespeak prayer. Many a soul is sluggish in prayer till awakened by the voice of the rod. When the rod makes the flesh smart, then the Spirit (in whom any thing of the Spirit is) cries mightily unto God, and among the many things about which the soul exercises prayer under afflictions, this is one, that the affliction may be removed.

As they alwayes sin, who murmur at and quarrel with God, because

cause he corrects them, so also do they, who say, they care not how long he corrects them, or let him correct them, as long as he will. It is as ill a sign when a child will not pray his parent to spare him, when he is about to chasten him, or to stay his hand when he is chastening of him, as it is to resist his chastisement. *There may be greater contempt of God in lying under affliction, then in resisting it.* Now, as it is our duty to pray for deliverance out of trouble; so it is one end why the Lord casts us into trouble, that we may be engaged to pray for deliverance.

But take it with a caution, we must not pray absolutely for deliverance, or the removal of afflictions, but at least with an implicit limitation. While we are striving earnestly for the taking away of the rod, we should be ready to submit, if the Lord will not take it away. A believer may say to the Lord (as wrestling Jacob) *I will not let thee go except thou bless me*; but he must not say, *I will not let thee go, except thou now deliver me.* Time, and means, and manner must all be laid at Gods feet, and submitted to his wisdom. And we must honour God, though he will not remove the rod, even while we are praying that he would remove it.

For the close of this point consider, the rod may be removed, not only by a total release from affliction; But

First, By an abatement of the affliction; as we are said to leave off those graces, from the degrees and lively actings of which we fall and decline: *He that lacketh these things* (that is, who aboundeth not, as he hath heretofore, in the exercise of them) *is blind, &c.* (2 Pet. 1. 9.) *Thou hast left thy first love*, saith Christ to the Angel of Ephesus, when the heat of his former love was cooled: So the Lord may be said to remove our troubles, when he remits the extremity, and cools the heat of them.

Secondly, The rod is removed, when it is sanctified to us, when the Lord (who is excellent in working) causeth it to do us good. The Saints die, yet *death is abolished*, as to the Saints, by the death of Christ (2 Tim. 1. 10.) because Christ hath pluckt out the sting of their death, and made it again to them. Thus while Christ makes temporal losses or sufferings an advantage to the spiritual estate of his people, he takes them away. And as outward blessings are taken away, from wicked men, while they possess them, riches are not riches to them, nor is their honour an honour to them, because they are ensnared by them: So the outward cross is

is taken away from the godly, while they suffer, because they are bettered by the cross.

Thirdly, Affliction is removed from us, when Christ gives us strength to bear affliction. Nothing grieves us, either in active or passive obedience, but what is either against our wills, or above our power: It is all one to have a burthen taken off our shoulders, or to have so much strength given, as makes it ealie to us. While the Saints have trouble upon their backs and loins, they have no trouble in their hearts and spirits, when their spirits are carried above those troubles. *To conquer an enemy is more noble then to have none.* Much more (which is promised the Saints in the throng of forest enemies) to be more then conquerours. In all, or any of these wayes, *Jobs* prayer may be fulfilled, *Take away thy rod from me.*

And let not thy fear terrifie me.

There was somewhat more upon *Job* then a rod, or it was an extraordinary rod, a rod like a Scorpion.

Let not thy fear terrifie me.

The word which we translate [*fear*] comes from a root signifying that which is very formidable and terrible. *Fear and dread shall fall upon them* (Exod. 15. 16.) that is, they shall be extremely afraid, even dead with fear, as the next words import, *They shall be still as a stone, &c.* There is a letter added as the Hebricians observe) to the word used by *Moses*, implying the excess of fear. Giants are called by this name *Emims* (Deut. 2. 11. because they are of a dreadful aspect. The whole host of *Israel* trembled at the sight of *Goliath* (1 Sa. 17. 24.) An Idol is express'd by this name *Emims*. And there is a double reason of it. Either because Idols are a terror to their worshippers: we hear how at this day poor Pagans, who worship Idols, are extremely oppress'd with slavish fear of displeasing them. *The true God is terrible to his despisers; but false Gods are terrible to their worshippers.*

Or secondly, They were called *Emims* in a way of contempt; *Yours are terrible Gods sure? They have hands and handle not, feet and walk not, eyes and see not.* Here are terrible gods. So then Idols are *Emims*, either because they are really to be feared so little; or because they are superstitiously feared so much.

יִרְאָה

dread

וִיחָה

Formidabilis,
terribilis.
Emmah.אֵמִים
no me trans-
ver sum agat.
Sept. alius, no
me confertur.

Ex vi verbi
originalis ejus-
modi terror est
qui hominem
exagitat &
quasi extra se
valde distra-
bat.

Jobs fear was no needless fear, he was not terrified with a fancy, though his fancy was ready enough to over-act upon his affliction, and so encreased his fear, *Let not thy fear*, that is (say some) fearful thoughts or fighs terrifie me. So (Chap. 7. 14.) *When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions.* There is an humbling and a cleansing fear, *The fear of the Lord is clean*, not only in the nature of it, but in the effects of it (Psal. 19. 9.) There is also an amazing, and a terrifying fear, such the letter of the original imports this to be, even a fear bordering upon madness, as if he were rather frightened then afraid, and scared, rather then troubled.

Others expound this fear with reference to the two former verses, especially to the verse immediately foregoing. There *Job* desires a *Dayes-man*, or complains that there is none; here he tells us what he might have expected, if he had one. As if he had said, *Had I a Dayes-man, then I know he would take away the rod from me, that is, he would give judgment that I should be eased of this affliction; and his fear should not terrifie me, that is, he would never give a sentence which should be a terror to me.* That's a fair sense in reference to what he spake before; but I rather keep his meaning within the compass of what he is speaking here.

And then by fear we may understand;

First, Those rayes and beams of Majesty, which the Lord letting out a little upon *Job*, he was not able to bear them. We find when in those ancient times God appeared, the beholders were terrified. *Manoahs* wife tells her husband, *A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an Angel of God, very terrible* (Judg. 13. 6.) And when God appeared to *Abraham*, *An horror of great darknes fell upon him* (Gen. 15. 12.) in what a woful plight was *Daniel*, receiving the visions of God? (Dan. 10. 8.) God who is the joy of his people, is also a terror to them. Things which are not what they seem to be, are not so terrible near hand as at a distance; God who is infinitely more then he can seem to be, is more terrible near hand then at a distance. Hence it is, that when God, who is alwayes near us, shews himself to be so, our spirits fail within us. In that presence of God which we shall have in glory, there will be fulness of joy. And in that presence of God which we have in the wayes of grace, there is abundance of joy. But if while we are here in a

P. Ver. in nomine
intelligendum
putarem fulgo-
rem, splendo-
rem vel majes-
tatem nimiam,
qua priscis illis
temporibus
nonnunquam
Dei vel An-
gelus pro Deo
sevis suis ap-
parebat. Bol.

state

state of grace, some little of that presence of God, which is proper to the state of glory falls upon us, we are more distressed then comforted with it. How much more then, when God clothes himself with terrour, and (as he did to *Job*) so reveals himself unto us.

Secondly, We may interpret *this fear* (by the former part of the verse) the *rod*; his afflictions were terrible, the hand of God lifted up to smite him, made him afraid. But whether it were this or that, the majesty of God over-awing him, or the rod of God chastening him, the sense is plain, *Job* was oppressed with fear from the Lord, yea with terrour from the Almighty, causing this vehement deprecation, *Let not his fear terrifie me*. Hence observe,

First, That, *God sometimes appears terribly to those he loves entirely.*

Job was one of Gods darlings; and God was imbracing him, while he was scourging him. *Job* had kisses from heaven, when he felt nothing but lathes here upon the earth. The heart of God was full of love, while his hand was filled with a rod; his bowels yearn'd upon *Job*, and his face terrified him at the same time. That precious man *Heman*, was followed with terrors and visions of amazement all his dayes, *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up, while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted* (*Psal.* 88. 15.) The terrors of God, even terrors to distraction, may be the present portion of those, whose portion is everlasting mercy. Observe,

Secondly, *Man is not able to bear the anger of God.*

Though he be but correcting us, yet we cannot bear his anger toward us. This caused the Prophet to cry out (*Jer.* 10. 24) *Correct me, O Lord, but not in thine anger.* The words are not a prayer for correction (I know no warrant for that) but a submission to it. As if he had said, Lord, I am willing to bear thy correction, but I cannot (and who can? bear thine anger. The Church complains (*Psal.* 90. 7.) *We are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled* The fatherly anger of God, is as a consuming fire, and we are but as stubble before it: What then is the fierceness of that anger, which he will pour out upon wicked men for ever! *Who knoweth the power of thine anger?* (*Psal.* 90. 11.) Man cannot understand how powerful the anger of God is, much less stand before the power of his anger. As

man cannot comprehend the love of God (*Ephes. 3. 18, 19.*) The Apostle exhorts, *To know the love of God which passeth knowledge*; that is, to know so much of it as is knowable; (the love of God is past the knowledge, not only of nature, but of grace, because it is infinite) So we should labour, *To know the anger of God, which passeth knowledge*, that is, to know it so far as it is knowable. The anger of God cannot be fully known, because it hath an infiniteness in it, as well as his love. And as the one shall never be fully known, but by enjoying it; so neither can the other, but by feeling it. Upon this consideration the Lord makes that gracious promise to his people (*Isa. 57. 16.*) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth, for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* But is not the spirit or soul of man of an everlasting make? And shall not the damned endure the contendings of Gods wrath for ever, and not fail? The substance of the soul cannot fail, and the spirit is incorruptible; The spirit is full of moral corruption, but is it not subject to natural corruption, or the corruption of its nature. How glad would the damned be, if their spirits might fail, and their souls return to nothing. The failing of the spirit under the wrath of God, is the failing of its hope and courage. Thus the spirit sinks, and the immortal soul dies away under the sense and weight of Gods displeasure.

But what if the Lord should take away his rod, and change his terrours into smiles? What will *Job* do then? when this is granted, see what he will do.

Vers. 35. *Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me.*

ἤνι καὶ φοβηθήσμαι,
ἀλλὰ καλῶσω.
Sept.

But is this the use which *Job* would make of the mercy he begs? Doth he entreat the Lord to take his terrifying fear away from him, and then resolve not to fear him at all? Whose voice is this? Is this the Voice of *Job*; *I will speak and not fear him*? *Job's* character in the first Chapter was, *A man fearing God*; and dares he now say, *I will speak and not fear him*? As the fear of God ought to be the seasoning of all our works and actions, so it ought to be the seasoning of all our words and speeches: why then doth he say, *I will speak and not fear him*?

To clear this, I answer, Fear may be taken two ways. Either for the grace of fear, or for the perturbation of fear. When *Job* saith

faith, I would speak and not fear him, his meaning is not to lay down that fear of God, which is a bridle to the soul, keeping it from sin, or that reverential affection, which fits us for, and should act us in every holy duty we perform to God. When Job prayed to be free from the fear of God, he resolved thus to fear God. 'Tis only the perturbation of fear, distracting fear, not sanctifying, humbling fear, which Job would lay aside, when God should please to withdraw his terrifying fear. And so his mind is plainly this, *If the Lord will be entreated to remit the extremity of my affliction, and remove those terrors wherewith I am affrighted, then I would speak boldly and chearfully to him, I would set out the truth of my case, and declare the innocency of my person. Vehement passions hinder my reason, 'tis uneasie to speak, till I am eased of my pains: I cannot tell how it is with me, so long as it is thus with me.* Hence note.

That extremity of fear is an interruption to speech.

While sense is much troubled, reason cannot act much. When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel (Hos. 13. 1.) There, to speak trembling, is, to speak humbly. Our words to God should be accompanied with low thoughts of our selves. Ephraims trembling is opposed to pride and hardness of heart. They who thus tremble at the Word of God, are fittest to speak to God; yet excessive trembling hinders us in speaking. And until the Lord quiets and composes our hearts by a word from heaven; till he speak to our distempered minds, as once to the raging sea, Be quiet and still; we cannot utter our hearts, or declare our minds unto him. When God sends a gracious message to poor sinners, and invites them to a conference, as he did his ancient people (Isai. 1. 18.) *Come, let us reason together;* then they come boldly to the throne of grace, notwithstanding their crimson and scarlet sins; then they are not afraid to speak, they may speak and not fear him.

But (saith Job) it is not so with me.

There is much diversity of opinion about these words. M. Broughton translates, *I am not so with my self:* and gives this note upon it, *I am not such with my self, as Gods scourge seemeth to make me, or such as your words would make me.* The Septuagint renders it, *I am not so conscious to myself, or I am not so self-guilty.* The Hebrew word for word runs thus, *For not so I with my self.*

Some

Qui in iudicio
consternatur
non potest recte
agere causam
suam, sequitur
ut oportet de-
fendere ac tu-
eri, terror enim
impedimento
est ei.
Pined.

כִּלְאֵי כֶבֶד

עִמָּוִי

אֲנִי

Quia non sic
ego mecum.

וְכִי אֲנִי אֲנִי
אֲנִי אֲנִי

Non enim sic
conscius sum.

Some difference arises from the first particle, we read [But] Most [For] The original is rather casual then exceptive, *I would speak and not fear him, for it is not so with me.*

But the word which causes the greatest difference, is that which we translate [So] *It is not so with me.* The Hebrew is *Chen*, and that hath two principal significations. It signifies sometimes right or just, and is applied both to persons, and to things.

First, Unto things, Jer. 8. 6. *The Lord bearkned and heard, and there was no man that spake (Chen) aright; or things which were right, Jer. 23. 10. The word is opposed to evil, Their course is evil, and their force is not right; that is, the force, might or power which they have, is not set upon or imployed about that which is right, but wholly bent to do wrong; or they commit evil with all their might.*

Secondly, The word [*Chen*] is applied unto persons, noting a man that is upright hearted, faithful and honest, both in conscience and conversation. When *Josephs* brethren (Gen 42. 11, 19, 31.) pleaded for themselves, they say unto him, *We are (Chenim, right men, we are no spies. We are not come to find out the weakness of the Land, but to get a supply of our own wants. Joseph said, Ye are spies, ye come to circumvent us, to put tricks upon us, to work your own ends, by discovering what we are; No, say they, pray, Sir, do not misunderstand us, we are (Chenim, honest, right-hearted, plain-meaning men.*

Secondly, The word is used adverbially, *It is not so with me, that is, It is not so as you imagine.* In which sense we find it, Gen. 1. 7. *The Lord said, Let there be light, and it was (Chen) so, as the Lord commanded, so it was, Eccles. 8. 10. I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were strangers in the City, where they had done so.*

Upon both these significations of the word, different interpretations of the whole are grounded.

First, Taking the word to note an upright hearted man, *Job* is conceived to speak interrogatively, as if he put this Question, *For am I not right in my self? As if he had said, If you think it too much boldness that I have said I would speak unto God, and not fear him, Am not I right in my self? Am not I sound and true at heart? Thus he seems to allude unto that testimony, which God gave of him at the first verse of this book, A man perfect and upright; As if he had said, I am no traitor or apostate, I am as I was,*
and

Particula
Chen propter
variā quam
habet signifi-
cationem, va-
riā quoque in
interpretationi-
bus ansam
præbet, est
enim vox
equivoca plu-
ra significans.
Bol.

Qui bonam ha-
bet conscientiam
est (Chen) rectus
apud ipsum;
restituitur igitur
se bonam habere
conscientiam
et inde
wapphstet a-
pud Deum, si
non pro jure
suo agere, vol-
gratia uti ve-
lit. Coc.

and I doubt not but I shall be what I am; still perfect before God, and upright with men. And if so, why may not I have boldness to come unto God, and speak freely with him? They who are sincere with God, may have great boldness in coming unto God. Uprightness hath boldness with men; and uprightness hath boldness towards God. Though no uprightness or righteousness in man can give him boldness in himself, yet it may give him boldness in another. He may be assured, that though he cannot be accepted for his uprightness, yet being upright he shall be accepted.

Secondly, Others read it negatively, I would speak, and not fear him, for I am not right in, or with myself. And so the sense may be made out thus, I have not gone about to justify myself all this while, I have not stood upon my own righteousness pleading with God; if my righteousness were in my self, then I might fear to speak with God, though his fear shou'd not terrifie me, and though he should take away his rod from me; but I have a better bottom then my own, I am not right in my self, I am right only in the free grace of God, and in the righteousness of my redeemer. According to this exposition he returneth to his first proposition, laid down in the second verse of this Chapter, How should man be just or righteous with God? I am not right in myself; as I said in the beginning of my answer, Man is not righteous; so I now conclude in my own particular case, I am not righteous in my self: and being righteous in another, if God would but give me a little respite from these sorrows, I would speak and not be afraid. This teaches us,

First, That the confidence and holy boldness which the Saints have in coming unto God, is grounded upon the righteousness of Christ, not upon any worthiness in themselves.

Secondly, Observe,

He that is most upright in heart, is most forward to acknowledge, and most constant in acknowledging his own unrighteousness. They who are most proud, are most empty. And they who have least, usually speak with the most. Sincerity rates it self low, I am not right, that is, righteous, saith upright Job.

Thirdly, (Say others) I am not right in my self; that is, I am at present uncomposed and unsettled in my own spirit: As if Job had said, I desire that the Lord would remove his fear and mitigate my afflictions, that I might speak with him and not fear, for as yet I am not right in my self, my spirit is so overwhelmed, and my thoughts are

Quia non sic
sum apud me;
ut nunc sum;
sc. in hac af-
flictione uni me
nunc tractat
Et exagitat
Dens: sum ve-
lut extra me,
enimi impos.
Merc.
Neque enim
cietuens possum
respondere.
Vul.

are so troubled within me, that I have not the free use of my own un-
derstanding, nor can my reason do its office, much less my grace. I am
scarce in my right mind, but rather as a man distracted (so was He-
man) with the terrors of the Lord, I know not how to manage faith
under such fears, the majesty and dreadfulnes of God oppress my spi-
rit, as I am, I am not myself. The Vulgar gives this interpretation
instead of a translation, For I cannot answer while I am afraid.
Hence note,

A godly man in sore temptations, may for a while appear less then
a man.

Fears hinder him from shewing the best of his natural self, much
more any thing of his spiritual self.

Further, note two things, experienced by many of the Saints in
the day of their distress.

First, A godly man under greatest afflictions keeps to the opinion of
his own integrity, yet builds his comfort upon the free grace of God.

He can, according to the first interpretation of these words,
challenge all with this Question, Am I not right in my self? Is
there not integrity in my spirit? And according to the second,
he is ready to make this negative confession, I am not right in my
self, I stand not upon my own integrity.

Secondly, The Saints in great afflictions are often so overwhelmed
with the majesty of God, that they are not able to express their interest
in God, much less make out the comforts of that interest.

The former of these arises from that seed of holiness and stock
of grace abiding in them. The other ariseth from the natural
weakness of flesh and blood, in which they abide, and from the
moral corruption of nature, abiding in them.

Thus we see how the sense of the text rises, as the word [Chen]
is understood nominally, for right or just. We translate it adver-
bially, But it is not so with me; or, For it is not so with me. This
reading bears a three-fold interpretation.

First, In construction with the former words, thus, Let him take
away his rod, &c. then will I speak, and not fear him, for it is not so
with me; that is, I am not so fearful, or of so low a spirit, I am not
such a stranger, or of so little acquaintance with God, that I should
not know how to speak unto him, or that I should be afraid to
speak unto him. If the Lord would but hide that brightness of
his own glory, which dazzles me, and ease me of my own pains,
which distract me, I should sure enough speak unto him, and de-
clare my cause.

But

But ſecondly, We may rather refer it to the falſe and unkind opinion of his friends, who judged him a wicked man, or an hypocrite, which here he denies, *It is not ſo with me*; as if he had ſaid, *If the Lord would be pleaſed to grant what I have petitioned, I would ſpeak unto him without fear or doubt of being heard, for it is not ſo with me, namely, as you have ſuſpected and imagined all this while, or as you think it is. I am not the man you take, or rather miſtake me to be, if I were, then though the Lord ſhould take all his afflictions from me, and withdraw all his terrours, yet I ſhould be afraid to ſpeak unto him; yea I ſhould be afraid to pray unto him, every prayer (were I wicked) would be a praying down judgment upon my ſelf: But ſeeing I can boldly affirm, my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs, that though I ſin, yet I love not to ſin, that though I am weak, yet I am not wicked, as ye have charged me; my heart being thus clear before God, I cannot fear to open my mouth and report my cauſe before God.*

*Non ſic impius
ego apud me-
pagn.*

*Non ſum talis
qualem me pu-
tatis. Vatabl.
Merc.*

Hence obſerve (which hath been offered from other paſſages in this book, and therefore I ſhall only obſerve it,) That

A godly man ſtandeth to, and knoweth his own integriety in the midſt of all the clamours and ſlanders, the miſapprehenſions or aſperſions of friends or enemies.

Whoſoever loads and charges him with ſtudied or approved hypocrifie, he will (and he ought to) unload and diſcharge himſelf (at leaſt) with *Jobs* plain denial; you ſuſpect me thus, but I am ſure, *it is not ſo with me.*

Thirdly, The words may bear this meaning, I have ſought and earneſtly intreated the Lord to abate my afflictions, and to remove his terrours, *But it is not ſo with me*; Alas, I do not find that the Lord hath done any of theſe things for me. His rod is ſtill upon my back, and his terrours ſtand as thick about my ſoul as ever: was ever poor man in ſuch a plight as I? 'Tis not (alas) with me, as I have prayed, or as I would have it. The rod ſmarts, and terrours amaze me ſtill. Hence note,

That a godly man may pray in affliction, and not preſently be relieved in or from his affliction.

Many a ſoul can ſay, It is ſo with me, as I have prayed, I have the wiſhes and deſires of my ſoul: yet many (and I believe many more then can) cannot ſay ſo. The Lord lets precious prayers lie unanſwered to our ſenſe. We may pray long before we find it ſo with us, as we have prayed, and yet thoſe prayers are not loſt,

but laid up ; not buried, but sown. And it becomes us to have patience, till the harvest, though it be a late one.

*Quia non ita
est (sc. quia e-
st) me torkorem
suum non exi-
mit) ego me-
cum. sc. Loquar
mecum, ipso
querar & om-
nem acerbita-
tem animi ef-
fundam apud
me, ut facit in
sequenti capite.*

Lastly, There is an opinion which gives this verse connexion with the first of the next Chapter. As if Job had thus resolved, upon the Lords not answering his petition, *Had the Lord condescended to take away his rod, and remove his terrour, as I requested, then I had somewhat to say, and I would have spoken it out unto him; but because it is not so, or because I am not answered, therefore I with my self* (the word [*Speak*] is not in the text: but such supplies of a word are frequent, not only in the Hebrew, but also in other languages) *Seeing I have not liberty to speak to the Lord, I will pour my complaints into mine own bosom, and commune with my own heart.* He pursues this tacite resolution in the tenth Chapter, which begins thus, *My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my self.*

J O B, Chap. 10. Vers. 1.

My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my self, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.



JO B having in the former Chapter justified God in afflicting him, and maintained his own integrity, notwithstanding those afflictions, now returneth to that work, about which he had been too busie before; yet that, wherein it seems he only found (as the case stood with him) some little ease and refreshing, *The breathing out of his afflicted spirit in sad complainings.* He resumes his former lamentation, and renews afresh what he had been more then large enough in, at the third, sixth and seventh Chapters of this book. Here, as there, he shews how ill it was with him, and what cause he had to be in heaviness, under the pressure of so many evils.

And here, more then there, he remonstrates that he conceived himself more hardly dealt with, then stood not only with the goodness of God in his nature, but with that goodness which he had formerly acted both towards others and himself: This encouraged him about the close of the Chapter (vers. 20. and 22.) to petition again, that he might have a little refreshing before he lay down in his grave: and that God would (after these storms) return him some of those fair dayes he had enjoyed, before he returned to the earth, and should be seen no more.

His complaint is very rhetorical and high, yet with an allay or mixture of modesty. Indeed his spirit brake out, and passion got head, at the 18. and 19. verses, where he expostulates with God, in the language of the third Chapter, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb, &c?* But abating that excess of his tongue and spirit, his complaints are knit up with solid arguments, and his *Queries* put the point resolutely, yet humbly, home to God himself: that he would be pleased to shew the reason of his present dealings, and why he varied so much from what he had done in former times.

*Afflicti saepe se
exonerari pu-
tant, si laxa
habent de suo
dolore queran-
tur, & suas e-
numerent cala-
mitates uberri-
ma oratione.
Merc.*

*Argumentis u-
titur a natura
Dei & ante-
acceptis ipsius
beneficiis, qui-
bus mala haec
quae iniussit
Deus magno-
pere repugnare
videantur.
Merl.*

*Vehemens qui-
dam partibus
omnibus &
gravis est que-
rimonia, sed
modesta, si
unum illud op-
eratum excepe-
rit, ver. 18, 19.
Merl.*

The first verse gives us a general ground of this and of all his sorrowful complaints, The wearisomness of his life,

My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon myself.

The argument may be formed thus ;

He hath reason to complain of his afflictions, whose afflictions are so heavy upon him, and so bitter, that he hath reason to be weary of his very life.

But thus my case stands, my afflictions are so bitter to, and heavy upon me, that I am weary of my life.

Therefore I have reason to complain.

The assumption of this syllogisme is contained in the first words of the verse, *My soul is weary of my life.* And the conclusion in the latter ; *Therefore I will leave my complaint upon myself, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*

My soul is weary of my life.

Life and soul are often in Scripture put promiscuously for the same, but here they differ. The soul may be taken two wayes.

First, Strictly, as it is opposed to the body.

Secondly, In a more large sense (by a *Synechdoche* of the part for the whole) for the whole man consisting of body and soul. If so here, then the meaning of *Job* in saying [*My soul is weary of my life*] is no more but this, *I (Job) am weary of my life*, that is, of the marriage or union of my soul and body, O that this band (which I (though most are grieved at the weakness of theirs) find too strong) were broken, or a bill of divorce granted for their separation. Life is the band or tie by which soul and body subsist together. And when that band is broken or cut asunder by the stroke of death, the body goes to the grave, and the soul or spirit returns to God who gave it.

Again, When *Job* saith, *My soul is weary of my life*. Life may be taken either for the act of life, and so the sense is, *I am weary of living*; or it may be taken for the manner of life, and so the sense is, *I am weary of that course or state of life wherein I am*. Life is often put (not strictly for the act of living, but) for the state or condition in which a man lives, or with which life is cloathed ; The circumstances and concomitants of life are called life. Thus in our common speech, when a man is in misery, another saith, *I would not have his life, or what a life hath he ?* The Apostles chara-

cter of all natural men, is, that they are *alienated from the life of God* (Ephes. 4. 18) that is, they cannot endure to live such a life as God lives, or as he commands them to live, they cannot endure to be holy, as he is holy, or holy, as he calls them to be holy, in all manner of conversation. Thus *Job* was alienated from his own life, I (saith he) *am weary of my life*; that is, of a life thus imbittered, thus afflicted.

My soul is weary.

The word which we translate [*weary*] varies the understanding of this sentence. It signifies properly to be *weakned*, as also to be *melted* or *molten with heat*; because a man that is extremely heated or melted by heat, is weakned, his spirits and strength being drawn forth and dissipated. But it is most commonly applied to that weariness which arises from the displeasedness or irksomeness of our minds. All burdens upon the body are light, compared with those which reach the soul. Three things weary and load the soul.

וְיָפִי
Debil itas;
languescit
per metapho-
ram radio
affectum, offen-
sus fuit.

First, The filth and guilt of our own sins. *I will sprinkle you* (saith the Lord, Ezek. 36. 31.) *with clean water*, &c. What's the effect of this? It follows, *Then shall you remember your own evil wayes, and loath, or be weary of your selves* (it is this word) *because of all your abominations*. As if the Lord had said, before I change your hearts, ye sin, and are not wearied of your sins, nay, ye make a sport of, and dally with them: But when I shall work that great change upon your hearts, your opinion and apprehensions of sin will change too; nothing will be so bitter or burdensome, so unpleasant or wearisome to your souls as sin. *Fools make a mock of sin; they who are truly wise, mourn and groan under the sense and weight of it.*

Secondly, The unsutableness and perverseness of other mens manners or dispositions weary the soul, *The righteous soul of Lot was vexed from day to day in seeing and hearing the unrighteous deeds of the debauched Sodomites* (2 Pet. 2. 8.) The soul of God is said to be wearied by such courses of the sons of men (Psal. 95. 10.) *Forty years long was I grieved, or wearied, with that generation*. The Lord (as we may speak with reverence) was even weary of his life, he had such a troublesome people to deal with; they grieved him at the heart (as the old world did, Gen. 6. 6.) and were a heavy burden to his spirit. That's the Apostles language, in his description of
that

ἐτεροπόρευεν
forte pro ἐτε-
ροπόρευεν.

ἀνέχομαι Tole-
ro, ἀνέχομαι
autem dicuntur
translatitii qui
volentes onus
subeunt, & sub
eo perdurant.

that peoples frowardness, and of Gods patience towards them (Acl. 13. 18.) He suffered their manners forty years in the wilderness; which some render, He bare them as a burthen; the continual murmurings and unbelief of that people were to the Lord (who is yet above all passion) as a heavy weight is to a man, or as the peevishness and unquietness of a sucking child is to the nurse, our translatours conceive the Greek word should rather be. Thus also he reproves the same people by the Prophet (Isa. 43. 24. Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. And Christ (though by another word) speaks the same thing of his own Disciples (Mark 9. 19. when the man possessed with an unclean spirit being brought to them; they could not cast him out) *How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? I am wearied with your unbelief, O ye of little faith.* The Disciples were still so slow of heart, and came so short of a Gospel-spirit, that Christ professeth, He was burthened even with them, *How long shall I suffer you? The ill manners of all, are a weariness to the good, but theirs most who are nearest to them.* Which is also the reason, why a godly man is wearied most of all with the corruption of his own heart, for that is nearest to him of all.

Now, as our own sins, and the ill manners of others weary the soul: so

Thirdly, The pains and troubles which are upon the body often cause such grief of mind, as is an extream weariness to the soul: That's the meaning of this text [My soul is weary of my life] That is, my life is filled with such outward troubles, as fill my inward man with trouble, and weary my very soul.

Verbum **ὑπ**
ex sententia
R. David, &
R. Mardoc.
significat exci-
dere aut succi-
dere.
Excisa est ani-
ma mea in me.
Pag. Vatabl.
&c
Adum est de
vita mea, en-
morior, vel per-
inde ac si mor-
tuus plane sum,

Secondly, The word is translated by divers of the learned Rabbies, *To cut, yea to cut off*, as with a sword, or any other edged instrument: These render *Jobs* mind thus, *My soul is cut off in me*; or, *My soul is cut off from my life*; As if he had said, My dayes are at an end, I am ready to die, the thread of my life is cut, I am but a dead man. While life continues, soul and body are as it were one piece, but death divides them; or the recourse of night and day, runs the thread of time thorow our lives, till our web (longer or shorter) be finished, and then the thread is cut. To which similitude *Hezekiah* alludes in his mourning death-bed song, as he supposed (Isa. 38. 10, 12.) *I said in the cutting off of my dayes, &c. Mine age is removed from me, as a shepherds tent, I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining sickness,*

or from the thrum, which being woond about the beam, the Weaver having finished his work, cuts the web off from it. The same word in the Hebrew signifies pining sickness, and a thrum, because of the thinness and weakness of it. My life (saith Hezekiah) is spent, I am at the very last cast, the yerm of time is all wrought off, therefore my life is ready to be cut off. I am a borderer upon death, and to be numbred among the dead, rather then among the living. Such a sense this reading gives the text of Job, My soul is cut off from my life.

Thirdly, The word signifies a reluctance or displacency of spirit, arising from the sight and sense of that which is very loathsom, filthy, and of an ill savour. It answers the Greek word rendered Abomination (Matth. 24. 15.) The abomination of desolation; he means the Romans, who being Idolaters, their worship was abominable, and who being Lords of the world, their power was formidable, and laid all countries waste and desolate, which opposed them, or which they had a mind to oppose. And so when Job saith, My soul is weary of my life; his meaning is represented thus, My soul refuses to inhabit, or to act so filthy a body as mine; My soul loaths to dwell, or stay any longer in this nasty lodging: As David (Psal. 120. 5.) speaks of his weariness in dwelling amongst wicked men, because of their mortal filthiness, or the pollution of their minds and wayes. Wo is me that I sojourn in Meshec; that I dwell in the tents of Kedar; So Job seems to speak, in reference to the natural pollution and filthiness of his own body. Wo is me that I sojourn in such a diseased body, and dwell (which yet will not die) in such a dying carcase. The noble tenant, my soul, is weary of staying in such a stinking and filthy habitation, and I perceive (for I have moved him hitherto in vain) the great land-lord will neither repair it, nor as yet let it fall. As then, a man, who lives in an ill or incommodious house, saith, I am weary of dwelling in it; or as a man that hath a filthy garment, saith, I am weary of wearing it: So saith Job here, My soul is weary of my life, were I well rid of it, I should be well.

Fourthly, Many of the Jewish Doctors tell us that the most strict and proper signification of this word, is To contend or strive, to chide or wrangle (we may give it in that homely language.) As if the meaning of Job were, My soul doth even contend, chide and wrangle with my life, my soul contests and disputes the matter with my life, why it will not end, that I may get out from this body of mine,

Denotat dis-
centiam qua
homo interius
rubesceat pro
doloris sensu.
Proprie signifi-
cat *βδελυγμία*.
i.e. rem puti-
dam et que
nauseam parit
aversari.

R. Moyses
cum aliis He-
braei doctori-
bus existimat
propriam vocis
significationem
esse, litigare
aut contendere.
Litigavit ani-
ma mea in vita
mea.

and

Litigavi. Pag. *and go beyond the reach of these afflictions.* The 95. Psalm, vers. 10. is so translated, *Forty years long did I contend, chide or contest angrily with that generation:* The Lord did often chide with the people of Israel, and they used to chide with Moses; whence one place was called *Meribah*, yea, through their unbelief they did chide with God himself, and (there is no reason dust and ashes should have the last word) God also gave them their chidings, and told them plainly their *own*, more then once. Thus the soul of *Job* chid his life; what's the reason that I am held in this condition, why wil tnot thou be gone, that I may be at rest? Carnal men chide with their lives for hastening so fast away, because they know of no rest, or have hope of none hereafter. A godly man may be brought to chide with his life for making no more haste away, because he finds none, or so little rest here. *Elihu* (Ch. 33. 19.) describing in the method which God uses to humble proud man, adds, *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones wi h strong pains;* He is chastened; the word signifies also reproving, or convincing by arguments, and that in a quick and passionate, as well as in a rational and solid way. Now, while afflictions chidingly smite us, we are apt to chide them, and give them at least a word for a blow. *Job* did not only chide with his afflictions, but with his life, because it would not depart and be gone, being so unkindly used and embittered by afflictions. His soul did even chide his life out a doors.

*Crudelis effecta
est anima mea.
Chald.
Homo qui sibi
ipsi mortem
precatur adve-
sum se se vivere
videtur.*

The Chaldee Paraphrast gives the meaning yet higher, *My soul is grown cruel against my life;* As if he had said, I am so exceedingly afflicted and pained, that my soul begins to rage against my life, I can hardly hold my own hands off from my life, and I would not have God hold his. Let not my life be spared, how glad should I be to see it poured out, *Anguish is come upon me* (as the *Amalekite* reports of *Saul*, 2 Sam. 1. 9.) *because my life is whole in me. O that God would stand upon me and slay me;* my soul is hardned against my life (like the *Ostrich* against her young ones, Chap. 39. 16.) as if it were not mine. Let me die, and that shall be a favour, smite me, and that will be to me as a precious ointment, though it break my head, and let out my troubled spirits. Then we are cruel to our lives, when we care not what's done to us, or how we are used so we may be rid of our lives.

But (to pass this) our translation is clear and significant,
My

My soul is weary of my life.] I am so weary of the pains wherein I live, that I had rather my life should end, then my pains should continue.

Job complained in the third Chapter, he complained at the sixth and seventh Chapters, he erred twice, yea thrice upon this point before, yet now we hear him complaining, as if he had not complained at all. This was *Jobs* infirmity: though somewhat hath, and more may be said to take off those aspersions which his friends cast upon him for complaining, yet no doubt it was his sin to complain, especially to break out so often, and in such bitter complainings. Hence observe,

A godly man may (possibly) fall often into the same sin.

Where grace taketh hold of the heart, it breaks the custom and spoils the trade of sin; yet a godly man may sin over the same sin, and renew the same transgression. The trade of sin is spoiled, when the soul leaves devising, plotting, contriving sin, which acts denominate a worker of iniquity. The custom of sin is broken, when though the same sin be committed again, yet the soul puts in its plea and complaint against it. 'Tis here as in civil things, if we make our challenge or demand, the custom is gone, though the acts be renewed by the power and prevalency of the opposite party; yet, when I say a godly man may fall into sin often, I mean not of gross and scandalous sins; God doth not let his people fall often into the mire. *Noah* was not often drunk, nor did *David* commit adultery often, or more then once. The grace of God which bringeth salvation, teacheth us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. And if a godly man fall often into any the least sin, yet he lies not in sin, because he renews repentance, as often as he sins, and rises as often as he falls: he resolves (through the strength of Christ) never to sin, when through his own weakness, and the violence of temptation, he is soon after overtaken or surpriz'd with sin. *David* professeth (Psal. 119. 30.) *I have chosen the way of truth*; His election was truth; truth of heart, which is opposed to hypocrisie; truth of judgment, which is opposed to errour; and truth of speech, which is opposed to lying; yet he slipt with his tongue, more then once, and told an untruth, more then one. He cannot be acquitted from this failing, when he answered *Abimelech* the Priest, *The King bath commanded me a business, and bath said unto me, Let not any man know any thing*

of the business whereabout I send thee, and what I have commanded thee; and I have appointed my servants to such a place (1 Sam. 21. 2.) He again falters with his tongue, and speaks either falsely or doubtfully, when the King of the Philistines asked him, *Whether have ye made a rode to day?* And David said, *against the South of Judah, &c.* (1 Sam. 27. 10.) when as his invasion was against the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites (vers. 8.) He that overcame the Bear, the Lion, and Goliath the Giant, is overcome by fear, and the mother of it, unbelief. *David's* example should be no encouragement, shall be no excuse to those who willingly fall often into the same sin. A good man is not priviledg'd from doing it, but no man is priviledg'd to do it. Such examples must not teach us to sin, but they teach us how unable we (alone) are to keep our selves from sin: they teach us also, what need we have to depend upon, and look up to Christ, that we may be kept from sin: if he leave us but a little unto our selves, the flesh will discover much of it self, and we shall quickly shew what our natures are, though we are renewed by grace. *We must trust to the supplies, not to the receipts of grace.*

Secondly, When *Job* saith [*My soul is weary of my life.*] We learn; That

Soul and life in man are two distinct things.

For howsoever (as was toucht in explication) the soul is often put for the whole man, and so the sense of, *my soul is weary*, may be but this, I am weary of my life: yet the holy Ghost would never denominate all man by that, which is not, not a part of man. That's a brutish opinion which makes the soul nothing, or nothing else but life, and this life no more in entity then the life of a beast, which vanisheth, when it dieth. That these opinionists tell us, they believe the body shall rise again by the power of God, cannot satisfie for this fall, which their opinion gives the soul: neither doth the immortality of the soul at all contradict (which was threatned for, and is the wages of sin) the death of the whole man. For death consists not (if we may say a privation doth consist) in the annihilation, but in the separation of those parts of man, soul and body, which by life are united and kept close together.

Thirdly, When *Job* saith, *My soul is weary of my life*, we learn,

That

That the life of man may grow to be a burthen to him.

In the third Chapter *Job* wished for death, his wish was examined there, about the lawfulness of it, I shall now only examine (a touch about which was given lately) whence this weariness of life causing wishes to be rid of life doth arise. There is a weariness of life incident only, and proper to wicked men. And there is a weariness of life, which may grow upon the best of men. Take a brief account of the usual grounds of both.

First, Carnal men are often sick with discontent, and die of a humour: If the Lord will not give them their lusts, they bid him take their lives. Necessaries and competencies will not satisfy them, they must have superfluities; they languish, if they have not Quails to their Manna, as *Israel* once desired and had. Was it any thing but this, which made *Abab* go home sullen and sad? Sullen sadness is a degree of this weariness. *Abab* had a Kingdom, and yet he could not live without a Vineyard. *He that takes away another mans life to obtain what he desires, thinks his own life scarce desirable, unless he may obtain it.* There was a spice of this distemper in *Jonah*, though a good man, and a Prophet (*Jonah* 4.8.) because the Lord did but kill his Gourd, kill me too, saith *Jonah*, *He wished himself to die, and said* (his Gourd being dead) *It is better for me to die then to live.* It is an excess of desire, when we desire any outward thing (much more when we desire things unnecessary, things not to supply our wants, but to serve our lusts) As *Rachel* did children (who are the best and noblest of outward things) *Give me them, or else I die* (*Gen.* 30.1.)

Secondly, Some wicked men are wearied of their lives by the horror of their consciences. A hell within, makes the world without a hell too. They who have a sight of eternal death (as the wages of sin) without the sight of a remedy may soon be weary of a temporal life. As much peace of conscience and soul joy in believing, makes some of the Saints wish themselves out of the body; so also doth trouble of conscience, and grief of soul make many of the wicked. A man who is not at all weary of committing sin, may be weary of his life, because he hath committed it. And he, who was never troubled that his wickedness is as an offence against God, may feel his wickedness extremely offensive against himself. To such a soul the evil of sin is so great an evil of punishment, that he is ready to cry out with

Cain, My punishment is greater then I can bear. Yea, what his guilty conscience feared, comes to be the desire of many under the same guilt, *That every one that findeth them would slay them:* And some are so weary of their lives at the sight of sin, that they make away their lives themselves, hoping to get out of the sight of sin. There are sins which cry to God for vengeance, and some cry to the sinner himself for vengeance. This cry was so loud and forcible in the ears of *Judas*, that it caused him to go away and hang himself. And what made *Ahithophel* weary of his life, but his wickedness? The rejecting of his counsel was not so much the reason of it, as the sinfulness of his counsel: A good man may be troubled at others, when his good counsel is not accepted, but he grows not unacceptable to himself; nay, he is well-pleased that he hath given honest counsel, though none will take it, though all are displeased at it. But they who aim not at the pleasing of God in what they do, think themselves undone (and die they will) if they please not men.

Thirdly, Inordinate cares for the things of this life, make others weary of their lives. He that cannot cast his care upon God, may soon be cast down himself. Christ (*Luk. 21. 34.*) cautions his Disciples, *Take heed lest your hearts be over-charged with the cares of this life.* That which Christ would prevent in the Saints, falls often upon carnal men, their hearts are over-charged with cares: cares are compared to a burden, and they are compared to thorns, they do not only press, but vex and wound: Their weight presses some to death, their sharpness wounds others to death: And not a few would go out of the world, because they cannot get so much of it, as they would.

These things (among others) make wicked men weary of their lives. There are other things which make godly men weary of their lives; such are these,

First, The violence of Satans, and the worlds temptations. The soul would gladly be rid of the body, that it might be beyond the reach and assaults of the devil, and his assistants. There's a serpent every where, but in the heavenly paradise. Only they complain not of temptation, who are willing slaves to the tempter. The Apostle (*1 Cor. 10: 13.*) assures the Corinthians, *There bath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye*
may

may be able to bear it ; as if he had said, Temptations are sore burdens, and although yours hitherto have been but ordinary temptations, such as usually befall the Saints, though yours be moderate afflictions, and of a common stature, such as in the eye of reason any man may deal with by a common assistance of grace ; yet there are temptations, which (if God, the faithful God should not come in with greater assistances then usual) you are not able to bear it. *They who wrestle with more then flesh and blood, alwayes need more then the strength of flesh and blood to help them in their wrestlings.* And because they are often assailed with greater strength, therefore they are assisted with greater strength. For if God do either withdraw his help from the Saints, or leave them to wrestle with Satan alone, and to fight single with his Armies, or if he do not proportion the aid he sends to the temptation he permits, they are sadly over-charged, though they can never be totally overcome ; and 'tis possible to grow weary of the battle, though we are assured of the victory. *It is the honour of the Saints to conquer, when they are tempted ; but it is their happiness to be above or without temptation.* How many poor souls put up bills of complaint, and beg prayers against temptations. *Paul pray'd thrice, that is, often and much, when the messenger of Satan buffeted him :* whether his were an inward or an outward temptation is doubted, but without doubt that temptation made his life burdensome to him, till he received that answer from God, *My grace is sufficient for thee.*

Secondly, The Saints are wearied with the weight of their sinful hearts. Inward corruption burdens more then outward temptation : and were it not for corruption within, temptation without could not be very burdensome : The devil tempted Christ, but because he found *nothing at all in him* complying with, or sutable to his temptations ; therefore Christ threw them off with ease. That enemy without could do us no hurt (he might put us to some trouble) if he found no correspondence within. The traitour in our own bowels, opens our ports, and lets in the adversary. His sparks could never enflame us, if he found no tinder in us. The baseness and unbelief, the lusts and vanities of our minds, are apt to take fire at every injection. *A gracious soul cannot live here without sin, and yet can easier die then sin.* Paul (Rom. 7. 24.) cries out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death, or from this body of death ?*

death! That is, from my body which is subject to death by reason of these remains of carnal corruption, or from my carnal corruptions, which are the remains of my spiritual death, and are worse to me than any death. All the afflictions of his life, and the pains of his body, were but a play, and a kind of sport, compared with the trouble which this body of death put him to. He rejoiced in tribulation, but he could not but mourn under corruption. Many poor souls are so vexed with these mystical *Canaanites*, that their spiritual *Canaan* (the state of grace) is to them like *Egypt*, the land of their captivity. And when they are commanded to rejoyce: they answer, if we could not sin, we could rejoyce, *How shall we sing the Lords song in a strange land? O that we might go home.*

Thirdly, The Saints grow weary of their lives through the wickedness of other mens lives; not only do their own corruptions burthen them, but (which shews the holiness of their hearts more) the corruptions of others. The sinfulness and pollutions of the times and places wherein they live, especially of persons they are related to, makes their lives grievous, and imbitters all their comforts. *Rebekah*, that good woman, tells her husband *Isaac* (Gen. 27. 46.) *I am weary of my life, because of the daughters of Herh, for if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Herh, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?* The sweetness of my life is gone, if this son miscarry, as his brother hath done before him. The Prophet *Jeremy* cries out, *O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them; What made him so weary of living among them? (and that was but a step on this side being weary of his life.)* The next words shew us, *They be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men* (Jer. 9. 2.) Better be in a waste wilderness among wild beasts, than in a populous City, among beastly men. 'Tis a part of our compleat happiness in heaven, that we shall have no ill neighbours there. They who are evil can take pleasure in those who do evil. But the more holiness any one hath, the more is he burthened with the unholiness of others. And that's the reason why God himself is expressed to be so exceedingly burdened with the sins of men, to be wearied and broken with them, to be laden with them, as a Cart with sheaves, *He is infinitely holy. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God* (Ephes. 4. 30.) The Spirit is so holy, that sin (which is unholiness)

holiness) grieves him presently. And in proportion, look how much any man is more holy than others, by so much is he more afflicted with the impurity of others. As the holy Spirit of God, who is all holy: so the spirits of holy men (who yet have a mixture of sin) cannot but be afflicted with the sins of men.

Fourthly, Some of the Saints would part with this life, because they have got such assurance and evidence of a better life. When much of eternal life appears to a godly man, he is weary of a temporal life. Natural things are but burdensome trifles to those who are stored with spiritual. Christ saith (*Luke 5. 39.*) *No man having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new, for he saith the old is better:* He that tastes what is better than he enjoys, is unsatisfied with all he enjoys. We can hardly be persuaded what we have is good, when we see better of the same kind. How much more hardly is this persuasion wrought in us, that earthly things (which differ in kind from heavenly) are any great good, when heavenly things are open before us. When the Disciples (at the transfiguration) had but a glimpse of glory, They say, *It is good to be here, Let us build three tabernacles.* They do not speak comparatively, as if now they had met with somewhat, better than ever they had before; but positively, as if they had never met with any good before. When the Spirit carries the Saints into his wine-cellar, and gives them a draught of everlasting consolations, the wine of worldly comforts will not down; they begin to disrelish the dainties and delicacies of the creature. A true sight of heaven makes the earth scarce worth the looking after, or the living in. Such live, because God will have them live to do him service, not because they desire to live to serve their own ends. Paul was in a great straight betwixt two (*Phil. 1. 23.*) whether he should depart or abide in the flesh: but the straight was not in reference to himself, he was assured, dying would be to him, but a travelling to Christ, and therefore death was to him an easie election. His straight was only this, whether he should not abide still in the flesh, to supply the needs of the Church, and forbear glory a while, that he might prepare others for glory. The same Apostle (*2 Cor. 5.*) saith in the first verse, *We know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house made without hands, eternal in the heavens.* When their faith was thus upon the wing, soaring up to the assurance of *an house made*

serv. quest.

*Cic in Tuscul.
Quest. de Cle-
ambroto.*

made without hands, they grew weary of their smoaky cottages presently; they could not endure to live in those poor lodges, corruptible bodies, having a view of such glorious pallaces; therefore he adds, *In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven.* The word signifies groaning, as a man that hath a weighty burden lying upon him, which makes him fetch his wind even from his bowels. The body is the burden, rather than the house or the clothing of the soul, when once the soul knows it shall be clothed with an house, which is from heaven. As (I said before) much of hell in this life makes wicked men weary of this life, so also doth much of heaven.

The Roman Oratour tells us, that a young man, who lived in great prosperity, having read *Plato* about the immortality of the soul, was so affected, that he threw himself violently from a high wall into the sea, that he might have a proof of that immortality, by his experience of it. The Gospel forbids such haste, and knows no such wayes to happiness. As Christ (not we) hath purchased that estate; so Christ must lead us (we must not thrust our selves, into the possession of it: but yet the earnest, the foretastes and first-fruits of heaven, which the Saints find in this life, (though they be such as eat the marrow and fatness, such as may have the very cream and spirits of the creature to live upon) make them groan often and earnestly for the next life. *This is good, but heaven is better.*

Lastly, Which is the case of this text, the Saints may grow weary of their lives from the outward afflictions and troubles of this life. Sicknes and pains upon the body, poverty and want in the estate, reproaches and unkindness put upon our persons, with a thousand evils to which this life is subject every day, cause many to wish and long for an end of their dayes. And though they are ready to submit to the will of God, if he have appointed them to a longer conflict with these evils, yet they cannot but shew their willingness, yea their gladness to part with their lives, that they may part with such troubles accompanying their lives.

And as the afflictions of the body natural, so of the body politick, may make them weary of their lives. How many in *Germany* and *Ireland* have been so wearied with hearing the voice of the oppressour, that they have wished themselves in their graves, only to get out of their hearing. And with us, since these

theſe troubles began, have not many been tired with living; Have they not cried after death, & wooed the grave, as being weary of the world? The Prophet (*Iſa. 32. 2.*) ſpeaks of a weary land. *A man* (meaning Chriſt) *ſhall be as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land.* The land it ſelf (being inſenſible) could not be weary; but he calls it *a weary land*, becauſe the Inhabitants living in the land, were wearied with the troubles and continual vexations which they found there. In theſe caſes the ſoul of a believer ſtands (like *Abraham* when the Angels paſſed by) at the tent door of his body, ready to come forth, looking when God will but call, yea, he cries out, that he may be called (in the language of *Job*) *My ſoul is weary of my life.*

I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf, I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.

I will leave, &c.] That is, I will carry my complaint no further, it ſhall trouble none but my ſelf.

The original ſignifies alſo to ſtrengthen or fortifie (*Nehem. 3. 8.*) *They fortified Jeruſalem unto the broad wall;* we put in the Margin, *They left Jeruſalem to the broad wall:* So the ſenſe of *Job* may be this, My pains do not abate, but increaſe, why then ſhould I remit or abate my complaint, I will ſtrengthen my complaint as long as my ſorrows are ſtrengthened.

My complaint.

That word hath been explained before, it ſignifies an inward, as well as an outward complaint, and that moſt properly. Some tranſlate it ſo here, *I will groan in ſilence with my ſelf.* But the text requires, rather that we interpret it of an external complaint, formed up into words. The Septuagint are expreſs, and ſo is *Auſtin*, *I will leave my words upon my ſelf:* both interpreting it of a vocal declaration of his mind and meaning.

The greateſt difficulty lies in thoſe words [*upon my ſelf*] One renders, *I will leave my complaint off, or lay it aſide from my ſelf.* As if *Job* meant to give over this work of complaining, and to compoſe his heart to quietneſs, how unquiet ſoever his eſtate continued. But his following practice ſeems to confute this interpretation, and to deny any ſuch intention.

Permittam mihi muſſitationem. Tygur. Silentio ego me ingemifcam et Philoſophabar. Polychron. Deponam a me querimoniam meam. Jun.

Others give this sense, I will speak at my own peril, and if any danger or inconvenience come of it, I will bear it my self, I will run that venture. *Job* uses such language (*chap. 13. 13.*) *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may speak, and let come on me what will.* We may gloss it with that heroical resolution of *Queen Esther* (*Esth. 4. 16.*) *So will I go in unto the King, which is not according to the Law, and if I perish, I perish.* The Hebrew preposition hath various acceptations.

Prepositio *h*
frequenter per
super, nonnun-
quam per cum
et aliquando
per adversus
redditur.
Nihil contra
Deum, in mo-
tantum desec-
viam. Pined.

First (as we) It is translated *Upon*. Secondly, *With*. Thirdly, *Against*. Fourthly, *Concerning or about*.

We may take in any of, or all these translations. And from all, the meaning of *Job* seems to rise thus, *I intend not to speak a word against God, I will not charge the Almighty with injustice, or with rigour, to do which were highest wickedness; I purpose indeed to complain, but I will complain only upon, or with my self, concerning or against my self, I will not utter a word against the wisdom of God, or accuse his providence. I will not shoot an arrow against heaven, or send out a marmur against the most high.*

There are two wayes of leaving our complaints upon our selves, First, When we let them lie wholly upon our selves, and will not go to God for strength or patience to bear them. Who can sufficiently mourn over them, who leave their complaints in this sense upon themselves? It is sinful and foolish to leave our complaints thus upon our selves: 'Tis a duty to leave them upon God, and to pour them into the bosom of *Christ*, who can, and who only can either ease us of them, or make them easie to us: who can, and who only can take off our burdens, or enable us to carry them. The burden of our ordinary cares will break our backs, if left upon our selves; how then shall we in our own strength stand under the burden of extreamest sorrows?

Secondly, We leave our complaint upon our selves, when we make no excuses or evasions, but plainly charge the fault upon our selves. Thus we ought to leave all our complaints upon our selves. It is sinful and foolish to charge any of them wholly upon the devil, or at all upon God. An honest heart takes them home, and saith, *God is righteous, but I am a transgressor, what he hath done he may do, and he hath done justly in all that he hath done.* This is the sense of *Jobs* resolution, *I will leave my complaint upon my self.*

Hence observe,

What-

Whatsoever a godly man suffereth, he will not charge God with it, but himself.

He is more careful of the honour of God, then of his own peace, and had rather die then the glory of God should suffer. O Lord (saith Daniel, chap. 9. 7.) *righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face; And (vers. 14.) the Lord is righteous in all his works which he doth, for we obeyed not his voice.* When the Angel was smiting Israel with the plague of pestilence, David bespeaks the Lord in reference to the people, *Loe, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, What have they done? Let thine hand I pray thee be against me, &c. (2 Sam 24. 17.)* I take the blame to my self, Lord, upon me let thy stroke be, even upon me, not upon Israel: So saith the soul, in reference unto God, upon me be the blame of all the troubles and afflictions which I feel, not upon God; What hath God done? All that he hath done is right, and just, and good. *It is an argument of a holy frame of heart, to be often judging our selves, and alwayes acquitting of God: To be often complaining of our selves, and to be ever exalting God; to be alwayes thanking him for our comforts, and alwayes saying, we may thank our selves for our sorrows.* Whatsoever the Lord saith or doth concerning us, we should not only say with Hezekiah (when a sad message was brought him, 2 King. 20. 19. *Good is the Word of the Lord,* but also, Good are the Works of the Lord. Many men are ready to lay their sins (much more their sorrows) upon God. So the Apostle represents them (Rom. 9. 19.) *Thou wilt say unto me, Why doth he then find fault? Why doth God complain of us? we have more reason to complain of, and charge our faults on God. If he hardeneth whom he will, Why are we blamed for being hardened? For who hath resisted his will? Thus they question God, Who hath resisted thy will? whose lives are nothing else but a continued war against, and resistance of his will. They who strive most to comply with the will of God, complain often of themselves for resisting it. And though they know God hardeneth whom he will, yet they will not leave the hardening of any upon God, as his fault, but as his prerogative. They confess it to be as great an act of holiness in God, to harden some men in sin, as it is to soften others by his grace: Mercy appears chiefly in the one, justice appears chiefly in the other, but holiness equally in both.*

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

*Loquar quic-
quid mihi affli-
ctio suggerit.*

A bitter soul bringeth forth bitter words. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh. If there be abundance of joy in the heart, the mouth will speak joyfully; and if there be abundance of sorrow in the heart, the mouth speaks sorrowfully. As when there is abundance of filth in the heart, the mouth speaks filthiness. We may see the lines and image of mans mind drawn upon his words. One man speaks in the anger of his soul, and he speaks angrily. Another speaks in the pride of his soul, and he speaks proudly. A third speaks in the profaneness of his soul, and he speaks profanely. Again, one speaks in the courage of his soul, and he speaks courageously. Another speaks in the patience of his soul, and he speaks patiently. A third speaks in the faith of his soul, and he speaks believably. There is a nearness to this sense, in that of the sixtieth Psalm (verse 6.) *God hath spoken in his holiness*; and we are assured he cannot but speak holily, who is *all-holy*. I (saith Job) *will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, and he spake bitterly; his soul was bitter, and so was his speech too.

What he means by the bitterness of his soul, hath been opened heretofore, in the third Chapter, and in the seventh Chapter vers 11. thither I refer the Reader.

In brief, *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, is either this, I will let out the sorrows of my heart at my tongue, and it shall appear by what I say, what I feel. Or

*Non tam mea
futura sunt
verba, quam
meae amaritu-
dini, hæc enim
imperat et ex-
corquet oratio-
nem.*

Further, *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, may be taken as an Apology for what he spake. As if he had said, *Do not charge my complaint upon my own account, If I speak bitterly, it is not I that speak, but the bitterness that is in me.* As Paul, when he did what he would not, pleads in the seventh of the Romans, *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* It is not I Paul an Apostle, not I regenerate Paul, but the remains of unregenerate Paul, of Paul a Pharisee, which rebell against the Law of God. In the same manner saith Job here, and so say the Saints; Are we at any time impatient, and complain more then becometh us, know it is not we that speak, but the *bitterness of our hearts*. The thing which we would not, that speak we; and therefore it is not we that speak, but the sorrow that dwelleth in us.

So then, speaking in the bitterness of the soul, notes either the excess

excess or greatness of a complaint, or the cause and spring of a complaint. The complaints of *Job* came not from the ordinary temper of his spirit, but from the troubles of his estate, distemp'ring his spirit; he desired rather to be praising and glorifying God for his receipts, then complaining over his own wants. But his wants were such, as he could not refrain from complaining, *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*

But what speaks he?

As when he first spake these words (*Chap. 7. 11.*) he presently turned his speech to God, desiring him to deal more sweetly with him, and puts the question, *Am I a Sea or a Whale?* &c.

So here, after he hath set forth his resolvedness to complain, he presently turns his speech to God, imploring favour, *I will say unto God, do not condemn me* (vers. 2.) and he puts the question (vers. 3.) *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?* As if he had said, Lord, I cannot but complain of my condition, and I must take the boldness to complain to thee; but I will not complain of thee, as if thou wert mine enemy; nor will I contend with thee, as if thou wert a party, my meaning and scope is only this, to supplicate thee as a Judge. *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me, &c.*

J O B, Chap. 10. Vers. 2, 3.

I will say unto God, Do not condemn me, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

IN the former verse, *Job* resolved to complain, in this second he begins his complaint; *I will say unto God, &c.* He complains to God, not against God. He leaves his complaint upon himself, but he tendereth and presenteth it before the Lord, *I will say unto God.*

What he saith may be cast into a double request;

1. That God would not condemn him.
2. That he would instruct or convince him; as if he had said,
Lord,

Lord, do not use thy absolute power to destroy me; Do not reject me, because thou wilt? Shew me the reason of thy proceedings, that I may either sit down contented with what is amiss in my state, or reform and amend what is amiss in my life.

Do not condemn me.

παρὰ τὴν ἀποκρίσιν
διδάσκω.

Noli me docere
impium esse.

Sept.

Fortè graviore
aliqua tristitia

obrutus, impiam
aliquam vocem

omittam, q. d.

Noli occasio-
nem querere
mei lapsus.

The Septuagint hath a very different rendering of this clause, I will say unto God, Do not teach me to be wicked, or to do wickedly; but is it not wickedness as black as hell, to suppose that God teaches any man to be wicked? The Lord hates wickedness, and can he teach it? The Lord punishes wickedness, therefore he cannot teach it.

The mind of the Greek translatours is not, that God doth formally teach any to be wicked, but that some learn wickedness, or are ensnared in sin by that which God doth unto them; As if Job had said, Lord, do not encrease and heap afflictions upon me. Do not over-grieve and burden the spirit of thy poor creature, lest he should even be forced through impatience to speak unadvisedly, or do anything unbecomingly: Lord, do not occasion me thorow the extremity of my afflictions to say or do that which I must repent and be ashamed of. Which is also the sense of that petition in the Lords-prayer, Lead us not into temptation. Great afflictions lay us open to great temptations. And as calamity is an occasion for our graces and vertues to shew themselves, so also for our lusts and corruptions. Some never appear so holy; and others, (I mean of those who are really godly) never shew so much unholiness, as in affliction. Hence that request of Agur (Prov. 30.9.) Lord, feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be poor, and steal, and take the Name of my God in vain. Such is the meaning of the Septuagint, when they say, Lord, teach me not to be wicked. God teaches man to be holy, both by his word, and by his works, yet some of his works may occasion the flesh to learn wickedness, and to act wickedly.

Secondly, These words may be understood, as a Preface; or a rhetorical introduction to prepare the ears of the Lord to receive the bill of complaint, which Job was about to put up unto him; As if he had said, Lord (possibly) through the tediousness of my pain, and the continuance of my sorrows, words may slip from me, of which I shall not be able to give a good account, or others make a fair

Verba sunt ho-
minis se excu-
santis, & quasi
præcastigamus
liberorem
suam oratio-
nem. Aquin.

fair construction; yet, Lord, Do not condemn: Do not censure me: I speak only to excuse my self, not to accuse thy Majesty. I speak only in my own defence, let not what I speak be an offence to thee. Lord, I have so great a weight of affliction upon me, that I cannot but hope thou wilt give my words some grains of allowance, if they should want their due weight of wisdom and of holiness. As Abraham, when he was about to pray for Sodom, makes his apologies and preparatory speeches unto God, *Let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak, and I will speak yet this once* (Gen. 18.) So here, *I will speak*, &c. but I will first say unto God, be not angry, *Do not condemn me*, If (my infirmities prevailing over me) I speak amiss. Lord, be not critical with me, examine not every word strictly. Strong passions make an unruly Oratour; and when the speaker bears much, he may expect to be much born with by his hearers. That's a second. But rather,

Thirdly, We may take the words as a plain deprecation, *Do not condemn me*; The Hebrew is literally thus rendered, *Do not wicked me*, that is, *Do not count me, or cast me for a wicked man*. But did the Lord account Job as a wicked man? Or had Job an opinion that the Lord did account him so? Surely Job had good (yet humble) thoughts of himself, though he endured so many evils, yea he was perswaded that the Lord (who laid those evils on him) had good thoughts of him too: and when he saith, *Do not condemn me*, doubtless he had hopes possibly he had assurances that the Lord had justified and acquitted him; why then resolves he, *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me*?

First, We may expound him thus, Lord, Do not that against me, which may give the world occasion to condemn me; or, Lay not thy hand so heavily upon me, lest they that understand not the reason of thy dealings, should be occasioned to adjudge me wicked: Though Job had a witness above, and a record on high, though he knew his reputation was unblemished before God in the midst of all those breaches upon his family, and botches upon his body, yet he knew men would condemn him as guilty of the most notorious evils of sin, when they saw him languishing under such unparallel'd evils of punishment. This moved him to pray, Lord, do not condemn me, by making me an object of the worlds condemnation.

Again, The words (*Do not condemn me*) may have this meaning. Lord, * Do what thou wilt with me, only do not condemn

וְלֹא יִשְׁפֹּט
Verbum con-
demnandi fere
semper ad cul-
pam pertinet.
Noli me pera-
gere reum aut
fontem pronun-
ciare.
Hic supplicium
videtur me ve-
lut inipium sce-
leratumque pa-
lam declarare.
Pin
Ne quaeso me
ita affligas ut
omnes qui hoc
vident, judicent
me propter
peccata gravissi-
ma talia pati.
* Permitto re-
rum aliarum
jacturam, sed
non possum non
dolere vehe-
menter lesam
meam sanctitatem
et innocentiam
existimatio.
nam, Pined.

damn me. His earnest deprecations of this may carry in it a willing submission to any thing besides this. And 'tis very usual with men to do so; we think we could bear any affliction but that, or better then that, which is upon us. Yet *Job* had great reason to chuse any affliction rather then this. He might well say, I can, (through thy grace enabling me) bear these or any other pains of my body, and losses in my estate, but I know not how to bear the loss of mine innocency, or the reproach of being thrown out of thy favour. The world, and these my friends will be confirmed in their misapprehensions of me, if thou dost not speedily deliver me, and confute their rash judgment by some eminent mercy.

Condemnation hath three things in it, which make it grievous. First, The penalty of the sentence.

Secondly, The disfavour of the Judge.

Thirdly, The stain of his integrity who is condemned. To have but so much as a suspicion or jealousy of the displeasure of God, afflicts the spirit of a godly man, more then all his other afflictions. Though *Job* had a sure interest in the favour of God, and was freed from the penalty of condemnation, by his union with Christ; yet sometimes clouds and darkness came over him, and the terrors of the Lord did fight against him, which caused those sad lamentations in the sixth Chapter: but here he is chiefly troubled at the stain of his integrity in the eye of the world, who beholding his afflictions, blotted him as a wicked man, and esteemed him forsaken of God, even utterly discarded, and cast out of his sight. Observe hence,

First, That, *Great afflictions carry a charge of wickedness upon the afflicted.*

Paul having escaped death in a wreck at sea, could not escape a hard censure at land, when a viper was seen upon his hand: *This man* (say those *Barbarians* of *Melita* among themselves) *is no doubt a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live* (Act. 28. 4.) We find also that those exemplary judgments which befell the *Galileans*, whose blood *Pilate* had mingled with their sacrifices (it seems he caused them to be slain, while they offered sacrifice) and those upon whom the Tower of *Siloe* fell, left them all under a charge of highest wickedness; else Christ had not taken it off, saying, *Suppose ye that those Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered*

suffered such things? or those eighteen upon whom the Tower of Siloe fell, think ye that they were sinners above all that dwelt in Jerusalem? As if he had said, I, who know your thoughts, know ye are ready to think so. It is a very ill, but it is a very common thing, to judge both of persons and of causes by success. Doth a man gain and thrive in the world; here's a man sure whom God loves, saith the world. Though a Jeremy can say, *Why doth the way of the wicked prosper?* He can see them to be wicked throw all their prosperity; yet, how often are they accounted righteous, who prosper; and good, who enjoy good? But doth a man wither and go down the wind in the world? He's a man sure whom God hates, saith the world. Man is apt to think them the worst, who suffer worst, and that they have sinned most who have most sorrow. The Prophet (*Iſa. 53. 4, 5.*) fore-tels that Christ himself, *While he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows, should be esteemed stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.* Christ was esteemed a great sinner, when God gave him up to be smitten for sinners, therefore he adds, *but he was wounded for our transgressions, &c.*

Secondly, observe, *The displeasure of God is more grievous to the Saints, then all other pressures and sorrows whatsoever.*

Job saith not, Lord do not afflict me, do not chasten me, lay not thine hand upon me any more, but, Lord, do not condemn me. It is infinitely worse to be condemned, then to be chastened, yea then to be killed. Condemnation carries in it an argument of disfavour, and that makes it so burdensome. As the love of God is better to us, then all the good things of this life (*Pſal. 4. 6.*) Many will say, *Who will shew us any good?* This is the great query of the world: but what saith David, Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; thou hast put gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their corn and their wine encreased. And as the favour of God is better to us then the good things of this life, so then life, which is better then all earthly goods (*Pſal. 63. 3.*) Thy loving kindness is better then life; Now, I say, as the love of God is better to us then the best things in the world, so the displeasure of God is worser to us then the worst things that are in the world, all the torments and racks, all the sicknesses and distempers, all the reproaches and contempts of men have not so much evil in them to us, as one frown from God. Hence, as when two sore diseases (suppose the gout and the stone) both

very painful, yet one much exceeding, at once afflict the body, the patient forgets the less: so it is, when inward and outward sorrows at once seize upon one man, when the arrows of God are fastned in his spirit, he forgets the arrow in his flesh. *The wounds of the spirit heal all the wounds of the flesh*; they make them, as if they were no wounds, or not worth the complaining of.

Thirdly, observe, *To be accounted wicked, is a sore affliction.*

It is an affliction to have an ill name, though we deserve it not, and to be accounted wicked, though we are not; it is, I grant, far better to be censured, then to be flattered. It is very ill when others count us, and worst of all when we account our selves better then we are, yet it is no small evil to be accounted worse then we are, especially to be accounted evil, when we are good. A wound in our honour, is not a wound to be sleighted. It was no small part of the sufferings of Christ, that he was numbred with the transgressours in his death, and called *Beelzebub*, a friend of Publicans and sinners, while he lived.

Fourthly, observe from this, *Do not condemn me.*

That condemnation is the adjudging of one to be wicked.

Condemnation supposeth a man guilty, and leaveth him under a penalty. As *Justification* is the adjudging and declaring of a person to be righteous, or the accepting of *him* for righteous in another, *who* is not righteous in himself; so condemnation is the adjudging, pronouncing and declaring of a man to be wicked, *who* in himself is wicked. That's *Jobs* first request, I will say unto God, *Do not condemn me.* As if he had said, *Seeing thou art the God and Father of all, who call upon thee in faith, and fear thy Name; therefore in faith and filial reverence, I beseech thee to acquit me of my sin: yea, because I know thou hast acquitted me, therefore deal not with me, as if I were condemned for sin. Make it appear that thou art my God, either by removing these strokes (which represent me to the world as thy enemy, rather then thy son) or by removing the dread and terrour of them, that they may appear as exercises of my grace, not as revenges upon, or punishments of my sin: that while my body is pained with thy rod, my soul may rejoyce in thy love, and that, while I am under this cross, I may triumph over it. Or if thou art resolved still to detain me at this rate of suffering, then I have another humble suit.*

Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

That's his second request.

Shew me] The word signifies to make a matter intelligible or plain to the understanding; *If I must still feel these pains, then make me to understand them also.* Let not the whole weight of my sorrows lie upon my sense, manifest them to my reason; the more I know of them, the better I shall manage and endure them.

Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.] The word which we translate to contend, signifies properly contention between party and party, not the sentence of the Judge. The parties to a sute, contend, but do not condemn. The Judge condemns the Delinquent party, but he doth not contend. His office is to hear the cause, and upon full evidence on both sides to pass his sentence. *Job* speaks in the stile of both, desiring the Lord not to condemn him as a Judge, and to shew him why he contended with him, as a party. Thus the Lord is said in *Hosea*, to have a controversy with the inhabitants of *Israel* (*Hos.* 4.1.) and it seems by another Prophet, that he had continued a long one with them, and therefore promised, *I will not contend for ever, Isa.* 57. 16.

Further, *Cause me to know;* or, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me;* is, as if *Job* had said, Lord, my troubles and sorrows are very well known, they run into every eye, they are apparent enough to the world; all see that thy hand is lifted up, and I feel it: but the reason of it I do not understand, much less do they; there is a curtain drawn between the world, and the reason why I am troubled; yea, there is a curtain drawn between me, and the reason of my troubles: Now therefore, Lord, draw back the curtain, or unvail my eyes; let me see clearly, and let the world see why I am thus afflicted; for though I know I am a sinner, and have many failings, yet I know nothing myself: I am not conscious of any wickedness, or close hypocrisie, much less of any prophaneity or apostacy, which should cause thee to pour out such full viols of thy indignation upon me; Then, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

This [*Wherefore*] may have a three fold reference;

1. *Shew me*, whether it be for sin or no?
2. If it be for sin, *Shew me* for what sin it is?
3. If it be not for sin, *Shew me* for what else it is? What is the thing thou aimest at and intendest? What's the end thou

proposest to thy self in these my unheard of afflictions?

But is it lawful to put such queries, or to desire such resolutions from the Lord? Ought not *Job* to have prayed for wisdom how to bear his cross, rather then have asked knowledge, why it was laid upon him?

Job desired a reason: First, Not to satisfy his curiosity, but his conscience; not that he would be prying into Gods secrets, or unlocking the cabinet of his counsel to see what was there; but that the secrets of his own heart might be opened, and a discovery made to him of what was hid there. He desired a reason, not doubting the justice or goodness of God, but as suspecting some evil in himself, as yet unseen.

Or, secondly, He desired a reason, not so much to satisfy himself, as that the world might be satisfied; that they who judged and condemned him, as an hypocrite, might have their rash judgment confuted and answered by a determination from heaven. As if he had further said, Lord, if thou wouldest but shew me this thing, it would either stop the mouths of those, who have been so forward to censure me; or stop my mouth from any further complainings to thee: I cannot rescue my self out of thy hand, nor dare I accuse thy wisdom, in laying thy hand upon me. But, Lord, deal not with me by the strict rule of thy sovereignty, which is to act above all rules, and to do what thou wilt, because thou wilt, without giving a reason to thy creature. I cannot charge thee with injustice, if thou shouldst resolve to keep me still unresolved. I know thou art not obliged to give me an account of any of thy matters; but, Lord, condescend so far to dust and ashes. Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. If it be for sin, a sight of that (through thy grace) will humble me for it, and cause me to return to thee from it. If it be for trial, I shall undergo it with more patience, and my friends will behold me under it with more charity. Let all or some of these considerations prevail with thy majesty, to open this secret to me, and expound the mystery of my afflictions, Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

Observe hence,

First, *An afflicted soul is very solicitous about the reason of his affliction,*

He that knows what it is to be in the dark, loves not to be in the dark. As natural, so moral light is sweet, and spiritual light is sweetest of all. Man would not be under concealments,

or have all about him mysteries and riddles. Evil men love not that light which shews them a rule against their sins, but any man would have light to shew him the reason of his sufferings. To be troubled we know not why, is an aggravation of our troubles, *That is more then felt, which is only felt.* As to know the cause of a disease, leads and lets us into the way of a perfect cure, so to know it is half a cure. *Job*, as here he doth, so heretofore he had complained that his way was hidden (*Chap. 3. 23.*) and here, as before, he solicites that his way might be cleared to him.

Secondly observe, *A godly man may be long in the dark about the reason of Gods dealing with him.*

He labours alwayes to give an account of his own heart and wayes to God, but he is seldom able to give an account of the wayes of God toward him. The way of God both in mercy and in judgment is in the sea, and his foot-steps are not seen. As there is much of the Word of God, which a sincere heart after many prayers and much study, is not able to give a reason of: so also are there many of his works. The text of both is dark to us, till God make the Comment, and he sees it best sometimes to make us call and call, wait and wait before he makes it. There was famine in the Land of *Israel* three years, year after year, and yet *David* knew not the cause; doubtless he did often examine his own heart, and look into the Kingdom, to see what might be a provocation there, but saw nothing, till (after three years) he enquired of the Lord, who answered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites* (2 Sam. 21. 1.) It is more then probable that *David* had enquired of the Lord before that time. A holy heart, especially one so holy as *David's* was, can hardly let personal affliction be a day or an hour old, without enquiring of the Lord about it: And shall we think that *David* let this National affliction grow three years old, before he enquired of the Lord about it? surely then this enquiry after the end of three years, was that grand and most solemn enquiry by *Urim* and *Thummim*, appointed at the last resort to God in cases of greatest difficulty and concernment; till *David* used this means, he found no resolution of that case, why the Lord contended with his Kingdom by famine, year after year. Neither had *Job* got resolution (when he thus complained) why the Lord contended with him, by sore diseases and mighty terrours, day after day.

But because it might yet be wondred at by some, how he durst adventure

Ne cui m̃dum
videatur istud
à me postulari
res ipsa huc me,
adegit, absit
enim à me, ut
tibi placere
posse existimem
violentam cu-
jaspam oppres-
sionem. Bez.

adventure to put up such a request to God; he argues further in the next verse, that the state wherein he was, seemed to necessitate him to it, and to prompt or put that request into his mouth; As if he had said, *My condition cries aloud to me, that I should cry aloud to God, Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.* For, far be it from me to think that the Lord delighteth in oppression, in breaking the work of his own hands, or in maintaining the works of wicked men: wicked Judges use to do so, whom God will never encourage (as with a light shining from heaven) by his example. Far be it from me to think so dishonourably of God, and therefore I am thus importunate to know the reason of his dealings with me, and what his thoughts are concerning me.

Verse 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked,*

Is it good, &c?

Nequaquam
probat aliorum
iniquam vim
multò minus
ipse alios op-
primit. Sanct.

I am sure it is not, it is not pleasing unto thee to oppress, to despise the work of thy hands, thou delightest not to shine upon the counsel of the wicked: Thou canst not endure any of these evils acted by man, much less wilt thou act them thy self: Thou who art just, even justice it self, canst not love oppression; thou who art merciful, even mercy it self, will not despise the work of thine hands: thou who art holy, even holiness it self, how shouldst thou delight in wicked men? Thou art of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, and approve of it. What blasphemy then is it to imagine that thou dost practise it. Thy justice, thy mercy, thy holiness, are such as cannot admit the taint of these aspersions.

Omnes vias in-
justitiæ quibus
terreni judices
corrumpi &
juxta pervertere
solent à Domi-
no conati à-
moliri. Merc.
Interrogatio
sensum reddit
omnino contra-
rium, nequa-
quam probas,
&c. Sanct.

So then, in this third and fourth verse, *Job* reckons up those wayes, by which earthly men corrupt or pervert justice; and he removes them all from the Lord. Some men do, but God doth not oppress: Some men do, but God doth not destroy the work of his hands: Some men do, but God never doth shine upon the counsel of the wicked.

Is it good to thee that thou dost oppress, &c?

These interrogations (we see) are vehement negations, they flatly and peremptorily deny, what they seem doubtingly to enquire. The sense is, It is not good unto thee, yea, it is evil in thy sight

to oppress, &c. Thou hatest oppression, wrong dealing shall not dwell with thee. *Job* puts these questions, not as if he questioned, whether it were good to the Lord to oppress, or good to destroy the work of his hands, and to shine upon the counsel of the wicked; These were no points of controversie with him, nor did he seek resolution about them. Yea, he therefore begs a reason of the Lord, wherefore he was so oppressed, because he knew it was not good unto *Him* that he should oppress.

Is it good unto thee?] The Hebrew signifies three things.

First, That which is profitable.

Secondly, That which is pleasant.

Thirdly, That which is just, right, or honourable, any thing tending to reputation. And there may be this three-fold sense of it in this place.

1. *Is it good unto thee?* that is, comes there any advantage unto the Lord by oppressing? Surely none, What profit is there in our bloud?

2. *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Is it pleasing or delightful? Is the Lord taken with the afflicting of his people? I know he doth not willingly afflict the children of men.

3. *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Dost thou reckon it thine honour to lay thy hand severely upon thy poor creatures? No, it is thy glory to pass by a transgression. Now seeing it is not good unto thee any of these wayes, seeing thou hast no gain or profit by it, no joy or delight in it, no glory or honour from it. Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me; that's still the burden of this mournful Song, *Is it good unto thee.*

That thou shouldst oppress?

The word which we translate to oppress, signifies a double oppression. First, An oppression by our words. And secondly, An oppression by our actions, the oppression of the tongue, and the oppression of the hand. The tongue is a great tyrant, the tongue will lay on load, and draw bloud. The Vulgar understands it of this tongue-oppression, *Is it good for thee that thou shouldst calumniate or slander me?* that is, Give others occasion to speak evil of me. That is a good sense. Slander and censure wound deep, hard words bruise the credit and break the heart, as well as hard blows, bruise the flesh, and break the bones. But take

*Ab absurdū argu-
mentatur,
quæ in Deo mi-
nime sunt, ta-
men cogitari
possunt ab in-
firmitate hu-
mana. Jun.*

בט

*Boni m triplex
denotat. 1. U-
tile. 2. Jucan-
dum. 3. Mone-
sum.*

*Numquid tibi
proderis. Vat.*

פב

*Significat op-
primere ali-
quam verbis
aut factis.
Numquid bo-
num tibi vide-
tur, si calumni-
eris me. Vulg.*

take it here rather for oppression by outward violence: So the word is often used (*Psal. 119. 122.*) *I have done judgment and justice, give me not over to mine oppressours, to those, who would wrong me, because I have done right.* And it noteth, as an open or violent oppression, so a cunning subtil oppression, a cheating, fraudulent oppression. All wrong, how close and cunning soever, is oppression. We have that sense of the word (*Hos. 12. 7.*) *He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress.* How doth a Merchant oppress? He comes not like a thief or a Nimrod with a sword in his hand, bidding you, Deliver your purse or your life, commanding you to give up your right, or your liberty, but while in buying and selling, in trading and dealing, he offers you a fair bargain, or as we say, a penny-worth for your penny, he smites you secretly, and cuts your throat (as famine doth) without a knife: the balances of deceit are in his hand: Balances are put for all instruments, or means of trading, by these he deceives: light weights oppress the State, as a heavy weight presses the body. The word imports also oppression by with-holding what is due, as well as by taking away what we duly hold (*Deut. 24. 14.*) *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy; that is, thou shalt not detain or keep back any part of his wages.*

The word (you see) is of a large sense, *Is it good unto thee to oppress? I know thou wilt not oppress me, either by speaking evil of, or over-censuring me; either by open violence, or by secret fraud; either by taking from me what I have, or by detaining from me, what I ought to have. Thou wilt not oppress either with tongue or hand; either as a robber with thy sword, or as a merchant with thy balances. Thus Job expostulates upon highest confidence, both of the justice and holiness of God; as if he had said, Lord, I know thou dost not love to oppress; no thou art merciful and full of compassion. Whence is it then that thou seemest to act so unlike thyself? Is this thy pity to a poor creature, and thy love to the work of thy hands? Thou usest to rejoyce in the consolation of thy people, and mercy pleaseth thee; thou usest to send out rivers of goodness for wearied souls to bathe in, and streams of comfort for thirsty souls to drink and be refreshed in. How is it then that a bitter cup is put to my lips continually, and that I am overwhelmed in a salt sea, in a sea of gall and bitterness?*

Hence observe, God is so good and gracious that he loves not to grieve his creature.

Among

Among men (Mich. 7:4) *The best of them is as a bryer, the most upright is sharper then a thorn hedge.* Even they that seem most gentle and compassionate, will yet sometimes scratch like bryars, and tear like thorns: but the Lord changeth not, neither do his compassions fail. The actions of God appear sometimes unfutable to his nature, but they are never so. When he breaks us to pieces, he delights not in our breakings, nor doth he ever break his own, but with an intent to bind them up again. God is so far from loving to oppress, that one of his most eminent works of providence is, to relieve those who are oppressed (Ps. 124) *For the oppression of the poor will I arise, saith the Lord.* And when the Lord arises, oppressors shall fall. O Lord (cries Hezekiah in his sickness) *I am oppressed, undertake for me* (Isa. 38. 14.) As if he had said, This disease like a merciless tyrant oppresses my spirit, death hath even mastered me, and got the victory over my house of clay. Lord, Come to my rescue, thou wast wont to deliver poor men as a prey out of the hand, yea mouths of their oppressors. O deliver me from this cruel sickness, which is ready to oppress my life, and hale me as a prisoner to the grave. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?* And

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hand.

This clause hath the same sense in general with the former, *It is not good unto thee,* Is it neither pleasing, nor profitable, nor honourable, *That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hand.*

Some translate this clause by oppression, *Is it good that thou shouldest oppress the work of thine hands?* The word in propriety signifies to despise: we have met with it more then once before; it noteth also loathing, yea abhorring. And it may very well bear that other sense of oppressing: for when a man loaths a thing and abhors it, he will quickly slight and oppress it: who cares what becomes of that which he abhors? These two are joyned together (2 Kings 17. 20.) *The Lord rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, untill he had cast them out of his sight.* When once the Lord rejected, or despised the seed of Israel, they were presently afflicted and delivered up to spoiling.

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands] He means

DRJ
Significat rejicere cum fastidio, tanquam vile & contemptum quid. Merc. in Pagn. Ex fastidio & contemptu sequi solet rei contemptus oppressio. aut abjectio.

Huic hominem quem suis manibus formasti de luto terræ.

h himself Dru.

YU
Proprie labo-
rem & lassitu-
dinem quan-
dam ineffici-
endo opere de-
notat, ex quo
orationis hujus
est amplifica-
tur.

himself or any other man; all men being the work of Gods hands. The word which we translate *work*, strictly taken, signifies hard work, extream labour, labour with weariness. Here understand it in a large sense, for God works not to weariness. And when after he had finished the whole work of creation, it is said by Moses (Gen. 2. 2.) That he rested on the seventh day, from all the work which he had made. The meaning is only this, he gave over, or ceased to work, not that his work put him to any pain or need of rest.

But why is man called, *The work of Gods hands*? Hath God (who is a Spirit) hands, or any bodily parts?

By an ordinary figure in Scripture, hands and feet, eyes and ears, are ascribed unto God. He is therefore said to have hands, because he works, not because he works with hands. The hand is the instrument of work. Philosophers call it, *The Organ of Organs*; man is called, *The work of Gods hands*, because the hand is mans instrument in working. Now, whereas man is called, *The work of Gods hands*, it imports three things.

First, An immediety in the work, or an immediate work. God made man himself without any help.

Secondly, An exactness in the work, the work proclaims an accurate Author, *The work of thy hands*, a special piece of work, No hand but thine could make such a piece.

Thirdly, It notes the fulness and compleatness of the work, a work consummate and perfect, having the last hand put to it. Man is the work of Gods hands in all and each of these senses.

Heaven is called *a building of God, an house not made with hand*, (2 Cor. 5. 1.) Man is a building of God, and he is the work of Gods hands, yet God made man without hands, as much as he made heaven without hands. The hand of God implies two things;

1. The power } of God.
2. The wisdom }

Man is the work of both, For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead. Now if the beams and beauty of the divine nature be visible in all that was created, then much more in man, who is the epitome or sum of all that was created.

When

When *Job* puts the question, *Is it good unto thee to deſpiſe the work of thy hands?* he alludes to artificers, who having made an excellent piece, will not deſtroy or break it in pieces, no, they are very tender of their work, yea, they are apt to boaſt and grow proud of it. The inſtinct of nature teaches us to love, not only that which is our own by natural production, but that alſo which is our own by artificial conception or operation. Indeed if a man make a mean, or an unworthy piece, he deſpiſes it; ſuch work diſcommends the workman, and he will break or burn it, rather than let it be made publick to the publiſhing of his own weakneſs or unſkilfulneſs. Man was the maſter-piece of the whole viſible Creation. Man was made (not as other creatures) to have a being only, but that he might be in the likenesſs of God, and bear his image. The Lord needs not be aſhamed of, neither doth he deſpiſe any part of his work, much leſs this, which is the beſt and nobleſt part of his work. Hence obſerve in general,

Man is the work of God.

All of man, man throughout, is the work of God. The fabrick of his body is Gods work. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made, ſaith David, marvellous are thy works, and that my ſoul knoweth right well; my ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret, &c. In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them* (Pſal. 139. 14, 15.) A ſkilful Architeſt before he builds, draws a model, or gives a draught of the building in his book, or upon a table; there he will ſhew you every room and contrivance: in his book are all the parts of the building written, while as yet there are none of them, or before any of them are framed and ſet up. In alluſion to Architeſts and other Artiſans, *David* ſpeaks of God, *In thy book were all my members written*; that is, Thou haſt made me as exactly, as if thou haſt drawn my ſeveral members, and my whole proportion with a pen or penſil in a book, before thou wouldeſt adventure to form me up. The Lord uſes no book, no pen to decipher his work. He had the perfect Idea of all things in himſelf from everlaſting, But he may well be ſaid to work as by pattern, whoſe work is the moſt perfect pattern.

As the body, ſo the ſoul of man is the work of Gods hand too. His power and wiſdom wrought it, and work mightily in it. In regard of bodily ſubſtance, the moſt inferiour creatures claim

*Alio argumen-
to injuſtitiā d
Deo auferi,
quod artifices
ſua opera ama-
re ſoleant.
Mere.*

*Hoc corpus
meum quod in
utero matris
meæ iam con-
cinne & apte
formavi, de-
ſtrues?*

kindred of man, and he may be compared to the beast that perisheth. But in regard of the soul, man transcends them all, and may challenge a nearness, if not an equality with the Angels. The body is to the soul, but as a mud wall, which imprisons some precious treasure, at best but like a gold ring to a sparkling diamond. If the more unworthy part of man be a work worthy of God, how much more is his more worthy part? There is yet somewhat in man of Gods making, which is better then either of these parts, and is indeed *all man*. *There is somewhat in man more excellent then man*. The qualities of a man are superiour to his nature: man by his nature differs only from a beast, but some men by their qualities differ from other men: one man hath better qualities then another, but no man hath a better nature then another. As the soul is more excellent then the body, and reason then sense, so inward gifts are more excellent then the soul, and grace then reason. These are the beauty, the gildings and engravings of the inner man. The *Assyrians* are called, the Work of Gods hands, not only in reference to Creation, but regeneration in Christ (*Isa. 19. 25.*) *Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.* 'Tis a promise of the calling the Gentiles, when they who were not a people should receive Christ, and be made the spiritual *Israel*, by the mighty work of God. This also is the work which *David* intends, when he invites all lands to serve the Lord with gladness, because *it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves* (*Psal. 100. 3.*) Hence the Apostle calls all beleivers emphatically, *The work of God* (*Ephes. 2: 10.*) *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* Man is the workmanship of God, as he is fitted for naturall and civill works, but he is most of all the workmanship of God, as he is fitted for holy and spirituall works. All is the work of God, but this is curious work, workmanship indeed.

From the whole, take three cautions.

First, Be not proud of what ye are, all's the work of God: How beautifull or comely, how wise or holy soever ye are, 'tis not of your selves. What hath any man either in naturals or supernaturals, which he hath not received?

Secondly, Despise not what others are or have; though they are not such exact pieces, though they have not such excellent endowments as your selves, yet they are what the hand of God hath wrought them, and they have what the hand of God hath

hath wrought in them. Be more thankful if ye are better framed, and have more workmanship bestowed upon you, sleight not those upon whom God hath bestowed less.

Thirdly, Despise not what your selves are; To do so is a sin, and a sin (in respect of the body) very common. Many are ashamed to be seen, as God hath made them, few are ashamed to be seen, what the devil hath made them. Many are troubled at small defects in the outward man: Few are troubled at the greatest deformities of their inner man; they call for no repairs, for no fresh colours to be laid on there; many buy artificial beauty to supply the defects of natural, who never had a thought of buying (without money) spiritual beauty to supply the defects of supernatural. The crookedness and distortions, the blackness and uncomeliness of the soul are most deplorable, yet are they little deplored; we are called every day to mend and cure them, we are told where and how we may have all set right, and made fair again, and yet the most stir not, or not to purpose. God will not know any body at the last day, unless his souls be mended by grace; and some do so mend their bodies by art, that God will not know their souls at that day. Depart from me, I know you not (will be all their entertainment) ye have mended your bodies till ye have marr'd your souls. Besides, *What can the man do that cometh after the King?* saith Solomon (Eccles. 2.12.) The work of the wisest among men, is beyond the correction of an ordinary man. Much more may we say, *What can the man do that cometh after God?* The work of the most wise God is beyond the correction of the wisest among men. They who thus come after God to mend his work, lest they should be despised, will but make themselves more despicable. There is more worth in the very defects of Gods work, then in the perfection of mans. We may use means to help many bodily infirmities: but they who are discontent with Gods work, are quickly proud of their own, and will one day be ashamed of their own.

Secondly, Consider how Job argues, *Is it good that thou shouldst despise the work of thy hands?* Hence observe,

It is an argument moving the Lord to much compassion, to tell him that we are his work, as we are creatures, and his work, especially as we are new creatures.

When we are under such afflictions as threaten to ruine us, 'tis seasonable to tell the Lord he made us. David strengthens prayer

prayer upon this argument (*Psal* 138.8.) *For sake not the work of thy own hands*; all men love their own works, many dote upon them: Shall we think God will forsake his? See how the people of God plead with God in greatest distress (*Isai*. 64.8.) *But now, O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou our Potter, and we all are the work of thine hand, Be not wroth very sore, O Lord. Wilt thou be angry with thy work? Lord, be angry with the works of wicked men, and destroy the work of Satan, Do not destroy the work of thine own hands; thy people are thy work, Hast thou not formed them for thy self? They will shew forth thy praise.* That invitation to prayer (*Isa*. 45. 11.) seems to intimate, that this plea hath a kind of command upon God, *Thus saith the Lord, the holy One of Israel, and his maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me*: while ye come to me under that notion, that these are the work of my hands, I cannot deny you; Do but name this, and it is a law upon me, ye may have any thing of me, or do any thing with me, while ye speak for the work of mine hands. Hence when the Prophet had put the Jews from that plea, they were a lost people, and their case was desperate, *This is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour* (*Isa*. 27.11.) As if he had said, Ye were wont (I know) to come to God with this motive of mercy, when he afflicted you; Lord, thou didst make and form us, therefore have mercy upon us, but this shall prevail no more: He that made you, will not have mercy on you; He that formed you will shew you no favour. There is but one argument stronger then this among all the Topicks of prayer, and that never fails, namely, that God hath redeemed us, or that we are his redeemed ones. God bestowed much cost upon us in the work of Creation, and therefore under that title he can hardly cast us off, but he hath bestowed so much cost upon us in the work of redemption, that he will never cast us off.

Further, the Scripture makes frequent use of this argument to repress the pride and presumption of man, and to stop his mouth when he begins to question, and call God to account about any of his dealings, with, why is it thus? Or, why am I thus? Thus the Prophet silences the murmurings both of mans heart and tongue (*Isa*. 45.9,10.) *Woe unto him that striveb with his Maker: shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, Why hast thou made me thus? And when*

when the Apostle found unquiet and bold spirits busied in contesting with God about his eternal counsels, in chusing some and rejecting others, in shewing mercy to some and hardening others, he stops them with, *Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* Remember thou art the clay, and he is the Potter. *That we are the work of Gods hand moveth his compassion towards us, and represseth our presumption against him.* We must not proudly dispute it out with him, for we are the work of his hands, and we may humbly plead with him, not to despise the work of his hands, or to

Shine upon the counsel of the wicked.

God is light, and he hath light, but he hath none for wicked men, or for their counsels.

To shine upon the counsel of the wicked notes three things.

First, To favour or delight in them.

Secondly, To succour or assist them.

Thirdly, To make them prosperous and successful.

David praying against his enemies, saith, *Let their way be dark and slippery,* Psal. 35. 6. And when the Lord answered *Job* out of the whirlwind, he questions, *Who is this that darkneth counsel by words without knowledge?* (Job 38. 2.) As to darken wayes, and to darken counsel is to hinder and trouble them: so to shine upon wayes and counsels is to help and favour them. *The Sun is the candle of the world, and Sun-shine is the comfort of the world.* The Psalmist prays in this language, *Thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth;* that is, help and favour us; so it is expounded in the next verse, *Before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasses, stir up thy strength, and come and save us* (Psal. 80. 1, 2.) *Thou wilt light my candle* (was *Dauids* confidence) *the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness, for by thee I have run thorow a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall* (Psal. 18 28, 29.) that is, I have done great things, and I have overcome the greatest difficulties through thine assistance. Will God shine thus upon the counsel of the wicked? Or will he help the evil doer? *Job* denieth it, and therefore prayeth, *Shew me why thou contendest with me. I know thou bearest no good will to those who are wilful in doing evil, nor takest thou pleasure in those, who take pleasure in iniquity.*

Impiorum consilia illustrare, idem est quod juvare, & illorum captis ac conatibus favere.

But

But doth not the Lord give good success to those who are evil? Doth the way of the wicked never prosper? Prospereth it not so far sometimes, that godly men stumble in their way, and are offended?

I answer, God maketh his Sun to shine upon the evil and the good, but himself never shineth upon the evil. *Wicked men receive benefits from God, but they receive no blessings from God.*

There is a twofold light. First, The light of Gods providence. Secondly, The light of Gods countenance. The light of Gods countenance never shines upon the counsel of the wicked, they have only the light of his providence. He never shines upon them to favour them, though he often shines upon them to prosper them. *A man may have much good shewed him, and yet no good will shewed him.* The clouds and darkness, which at any time cover the counsels of the righteous, are clearer then all the light which shines upon the counsels of the wicked. God varies his dispensations often, but he never varies his affections; whatsoever he doth against the righteous, he never hates or dislikes them; and whatsoever he doth for the wicked, he never loves or likes them.

But who are the wicked intended in this text, upon whose counsels God will not shine? There are four apprehensions about it: who are wicked all agree, but who these wicked are is not agreed. Some refer the word to his friends, I know thou wilt not favour their sinful censures and rash judgments concerning me. Surely they shall receive little thanks and less reward for these discourtelies; thou wilt not go forth with them, or give witness to what they have done; thou wilt not confirm or attest what they have spoken.

Job (I grant) found little comfort from his friends: but I do not find that they gave him evil counsel, much less that they took wicked counsel against him. The Lord reproveth them for the error of their speech, but he did not reprove them for the wickedness of their persons. Indeed *Job* charges them deeply (Chap. 13. 7.) *Will you speak wickedly for God?* Yet I do not believe that he judged them wicked. A thing in it self wicked may be spoken, and yet the speaker not be wicked. Therefore I would not think *Job* aims at his friends, or fastens so deep a charge on them, though they had charged him so deep.

Secondly,

Secondly, Others conceive *Job* means the devil and his angles, *Wilt thou shine upon Satans counsel?* As when *Ahasuerus* (being enformed of that conspiracy against the Jews) enquired, *who is he? and where is he that durst presume in his heart to do so?* *Queen Esther* said, *the adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman* (Chap. 7. §. 6.) So might *Job* have answered the Lord, My adversary and enemy is this wicked Satan. He laid the plot and hath stirred up all these evils against me: I know Lord, thou wilt not take Satans part: Thou wilt not help him who would be the destroyer and murderer, who is the great malignant and projector against servant.

Thirdly, Others take the *wicked* here, for the *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, who were the instruments of Satan, in spoiling and robbing *Job* of his goods and substance. That they were wicked, we need not question; yet

Fourthly, Take it rather in generall, for all or any wicked men, upon whose wayes God seems to shine when he gives success to their works of darkness.

Hence observe,

First, *Wicked men are sometimes prospered in their counsels, and walk in pleasant (though in evil) wayes.*

God gives delight to those in whom he hath no delight. And they have many good things from him, who never had one good thought from him. Thousands are prospered and hated at the same time. When *Dionysius* (in the story) had rob'd an Idol-Temple, and at his return by sea had a fair gale and pleasant weather to waft him whom with the spoyles; See (said he) how the heavens smile upon us, and how the Gods are pleased with what we have done. The like conclusions many draw from the premises of outward prosperity: surely the true God is pleased with us: but there is a cloud upon this Sun-shine and darkness in all this light.

Observe,

Secondly, *The Lord hates the counsel of wicked men.*

He is so far from shining upon, that he, indeed darkens their counsels. He casts darkness upon them, even the darkness of his heaviest displeasure, when themselves think, and the world saith, all is light about them (*Zech. 1. 15.*) Thus saith the Lord, *I am very sore displeased with the Heathen that are at ease; They had their pleasure, but God took no pleasure in them, I am very sore*

M m m

displeas-

displeased with these Heathens that are at ease, that is, I approve not their courses, yea my wrath is kindled against their persons. The light which shines upon wicked men, turns all at last into heat; and then have alwayes the heat of Gods anger mixed with their light: a heat not to warm but to consume and burn them up. As when the Lord sends the clouds and darkness of outward affliction upon his own people, he sends likewise the beams of his everlasting love into their hearts: So he clouds and darkens wicked men, while his candle shineth upon their heads.

J O B Chap. 10. Vers. 4, 5, 6, 7.

*Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?
Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? are thy years as many
dayes.
That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest
after my sin?
Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and there is none that
can deliver out of thy hand.*

J O B proceedeth upon the same argument; and as in the third verse he had removed three things inconsistent with, and dishonourable to the justice God: So in the two Verses following, he removeth two more. And as he thus acquits the Lord from injustice or unrighteous dealing with him: so he appeals to the Lord (who was able (he knew) to do it upon certain knowledge) to acquit him from all the unjust charges with which his friends had burdened him, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked, &c.*

Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth?

The Question is to be resolved into this negation, Lord, *thou hast not eyes of flesh; Lord, thou seest not as man seeth*, as if Job had thus spoken, Lord, I have been long afflicted with grievous pains, I am as a man hanging upon a rack, to draw out and force a confession from him; Lord, why is it thus with me? Why am I brought to such a tryal? I am sure it is not with thee as with mortal Judges,

Judges, who haveing eyes of flesh, can see no further then the outside of things, and know no more then is told them, and therefore must fetch out what lies in the heart of man by examination; and if examination will not do it, they must do it by torture; Lord there is no need thou shouldst take this course; thou canst enform thy self fully how it is with me, though I would not speak a word, though I am silent, yet thine ear hears the voice and understands the language of my spirit. Though I hide or cover my self, yet thy eye of thy omniscience looks quite thorow me; seeing then thou hast not eyes like the eyes of men, wherefore is it that thou enquirest by these afflictions after mine iniquity, and searchest (as men use to do) after my sin?

Hast thou eyes of flesh, or seest thou as man seeth?

God hath no eyes, much less eyes of flesh; God is a Spirit, and therefore he cannot have eyes of flesh; he is all eye, and therefore (properly) he hath no eyes. The eye is that special organ or member of the body into which the power of seeing is contracted: but God is all over a power of seeing. The body of a man hath severall parts, and severall honours and offices are bestowed upon every part. The eye hath the great office and honour of seeing committed to it. The eye is the light of the whole body, and knowledge is the eye of the soul. The eye of God is the knowledge of God. The Greeks expresse God by a word which signifies to see: and he is therefore said to have eyes, and to see, because the eye is a principall instrument, and seeing a principall means by which man receives knowledge. Naturalists tell us there is nothing in the understanding but that which is first in the sense. The senses are doors to the mind; the furniture and riches of that are conveyed in by the eyes or ears. These bring informations to the understanding. Natural knowledge cannot have an immediate access to man, and 'tis but seldom that spiritual hath. Both are commonly let in by sense. The superiour powers must traffick with the inferiour, otherwise they make no gain. Though God hath no need of any help to bring in or improve his knowledge, yet that is ascribed to him by which knowledge is improved; he hath eyes, but not of flesh; he seeth, but not as man.

Hast thou eyes of flesh?

Flesh by a Synecdoche is put for the whole nature of man.

*Sp. u. n. nomen
dei Græcum
hanc videndæ
efficacitatem
præ sefert. Sed
nimirum à deo
spectare, con-
templari dici-
tur
Nihil est in-
telligi quod
non prius fuit
in sensu.*

Oculi carnes
sunt cuius
carnem iudi-
cantes,

The word *was made flesh* (Joh. 1. 14.) not body or soul, but *Flesh*, that is, *man* consisting of soul and body. Thus here, *eyes flesh*, that is, *mans eyes*. And so the latter clause of the verse is an exposition of the former. When he saith, *Hast thou eyes of flesh?* It is more then this, *Dost thou see as man seeth?* To have an eye of flesh, is to judge according to the flesh, and to see as man seeth, is to see no more then man.

When *Samuel* was sent to anoint a King over *Israel* in the place of *Saul* (1 Sam. 16. 7.) the Lord said concerning the first-born of *Jesse*, *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him*; The reason added is this, *For the Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart*. There we have *Job's* doctrine of Gods seeing delivered by God himself. *Samuel* thought he who made the fairest shew to the eye of man, must needs be the man who was fairest in the eye of God; but the Lord seeth what is not seen, and often findes most reality in the least appearance; he who hath not eyes of flesh sees beyond the flesh.

There are seven differences between the eye of flesh or mans eye, and the eye of God.

1. Mans eye is but a means, or an instrument of knowledge: Gods eye is his knowledge. The act and the faculty are not distinct in God. All in God is act, Neither is God another thing from his act: whatsoever is ascribed to him, is himself. The eye of God is Gods seeing. The knowledge of God is Gods knowing. The love of God is Gods loving.

2. Man must have a two-fold light to see by; an inward light, the light of the eye, and an outward light, the light in the air: without both he cannot see; a man doth not see (as Naturalists speak) by sending forth a beam or a ray from his eye to the object, but by receiveing or taking in a beam or ray from the object into his eye; The object issues its species to the eye, which being joyned with the visive power of the eye, man seeth: But God seeth in himself, of himself, and from himself, he needs no outward light. *Christ* is described having a fiery eye, *His eyes were as a flame of fire*, (Revel. 1. 14. Rev. 2. 18.) Even nature teacheth us, that those creature, which have fiery eyes see in the dark, and see best when it is darkest, because they see by sending forth a beam or a flame from their eyes, which at once apprehends the object, and enlighthens the passage to it. God who commanded light to come out

out of darkneſs for the uſe of man, commands light in darkneſs for his own. *The darkneſs bideth not from thee (ſaith David) but the night ſhineth as the day. The darkneſs and the light are both alike to thee. There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where any of the workers of iniquity can hide themſelves, Job 34. 22. Thus God hath not eyes of fleſh; he ſeeth not as man ſeeth.*

3. Man ſeeth one thing after another: his eye is not able to take in all objects at once; he views now one, and then another, make his judgement of them. But God ſeeth all things together; he beholdeth all at one view; his eye takes and gathers in all objects, and all that is in every object by one act. *The Lord looketh from heaven, and beholdeth all the ſons of men; from the place of his habitation he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth (Pſal. 33. 13, 14.)*

4. An eye of fleſh ſeeth at a diſtance, and at ſuch a diſtance. Naturaliſts tell us, here muſt be a due diſtance between the eye and the object. If you put the object too near the eye, the eye cannot ſee it, *That which is ſenſible put upon the ſenſe, takes away ſenſation.* Again, if the object be very remote, the eye cannot make any diſcovery of it, the eye cannot ſee far, and it cannot diſcern ſo far as it can ſee. We may ſee a thing, and not know what we ſee. But the eye of the Lord ſeeth and diſcerneth at all diſtances. There are none ſo near him, but he knows what they are, nearneſs doth not hinder his ſight; and there are none ſo far from him, but he can diſcover what they are, remoteneſs doth not hinder his ſight. And indeed all things are preſent with him, as in time, ſo in place; *God is neareſt even next to every object: He is in every place, yet not included by any, he is in every thing, yet not mixed with any (Prov. 15. 3) The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. His eyes are upon the ways of man, he ſeeth all his goings (Job 34. 21.)* and that this ſeeing is a diſtinguiſhing ſight, another Scripture clears to us, *His eye-lids try the children of men (Pſal. 11. 5.)* Let them be what they will, and where they will, his eye-lids do not only ſee, but try, that is, he hath a diſtinct, and a certain knowledge, or a criticall ſight of the ſtate and condition of every man.

*Senſibile poſſi-
tum ſuper ſen-
ſum tollit ſen-
ſationem.*

*Deus non ſolutus
eſt, proximus
obſeſſatus eſt
intime cum
illo conjunctus.*

5. Man ſeeth but the colour and ſkin, the face and out-ſide of things or perſons, but God ſeeth the in-ſides, and looks into the very bowels of them. He is a ſearcher and diſcerner of the heart: He ſeeth the ſpirit as ſoon as the face. Our clothes are not more open

open to him then our breasts and bosoms. An Heathen wished for a window there, and if we had windowes there, we could not see what's there. An eye of flesh cannot read the meaning of our spirits; but the Lord can look into the heart without a window, yea we are all window to him, and he at every turn looks not only upon us, but into us. It was prophesied of Christ, (*Isa. 11. 3.*) *He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes; neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; that is, he shall not judge as a meer man, but as God; he shall not judge according to fair appearances, or flying reports, He shall judge with righteousness, and reprove with equity.* Man (whose eyes are of flesh) should not judge according to appearance, yet because his eyes are of flesh, he cannot judge of that which doth not appear. But God who calleth those things which are not, as if they were, judgeth of those things which appear not, as if they did appear.

6. An eye of flesh may be deceived. The sight of man is subject to manifold deceptions. Many things put a stop to the sight of the eye. The eye of man is in danger of as many fallacies, as the understanding; and the understanding is entangled with many fallacies by the eye. But there is no error in the sight of God, nor any deception of his eye; you cannot by any art or device, by any policy or hypocrisie, by any masques or disguises, by any simulations or dissimulations make that appear to him which is not, or make it appear to him otherwise then it is, *The heart of man (saith the Lord) is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* (only the Lord who makes, can answer this challenge, so he doth in the next words) *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.* How can that which is deceitful receive according to its doings, but by knowing all its doings and all its deceits? As the tongue (the greatest troubler of the world) no man can tame: so the heart (the greatest impostour in the world) no man can discover but God, and he can do it easily, and doth it continually.

7. When it is said, the Lord hath not eyes of flesh, he seeth not as man seeth, the meaning is, his knowledge is not imperfect as the knowledge of man is. An eye of flesh hath been but a while & can be but a while, and therefore cannot attain much knowledge, *We are but of yesterday, and know nothing* (saith Bildad c. 8.) *He that*
bath

bath but little experience, must needs have more then a little ignorance. Experience breeds knowledge, and brings to perfection in knowledge. The eye of God is from everlasting. If he had not (as he hath) all knowledge in and from himself, he might have fetcht it in before this time, from what he hath seen. And he (having seen all things) must needs have perfect knowledge, whose knowledge had been perfect, though he had never seen any of these things.

Besides, As this phrase, an eye of flesh, imports thinness of experience, and thence imperfections of knowledge, so grossness of spirit, and dimness of understanding to attain knowledge. When Peter made that gracious confession (Mat. 16. 16.) *Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God*; Christ answers, *Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood (that is, man) hath not revealed this unto thee, but my father which is in heaven*: as if he had said, All men are flesh and blood, so dull-sighted and blind, that they could never have perceived this truth by any study or observation, it comes only by gift and revelation.

*Caro significat
aliquid pingue
obtusum cras-
sum minima
subtile aut
perspicuum.*

The eye of God is not an eye of flesh in this sense neither. All spirits have much clearness of understanding, much sharpness and quickness of apprehension. The devil being a spirit, though now a wicked spirit, hath one name from knowledge. How much more knowing is he, who is, *The spirit*, the Creatour of the spirits of all flesh, and the Creator of those spirits which subsist without flesh?

Demon.

Further, Sight is put for judgement, and seeing for judging. Judging is an act beyond knowing. Judgment is the result of knowledge: So, *Thou dost not see*, is, *Thou dost not judge as man doth*.

1. Mans judgement is often hindered by his affections. His judgement is hindered by divers affections, especially by love, and the nearness of relations; man can hardly see a fault and a friend, a sin and son together. Love makes knowledge as ignorance, and light as darkness. Christian Charity covers a multitude of sins from private revenge, and harsh censures; But humane charity covers a multitude of sins from publick justice, and wholesome admonitions. The former keeps from rigid severity, this endangers to cockering flattery. It is not thus with God, *He seeth not as man seeth*. They who have the greatest interest, the nearest relation to God, are seen what they are, and shall be judged

*Blum vides mo-
re hominum, et
sicut illi exsa-
cie judicant ut
affectibus du-
caris sicut
illi?*

judged as they are. God hath (indeed) an infinite largeness of affection to poor sinners, and the lap of his garment of love covers every day a multitude, yea many multitudes of sins. But he doth not this, because his love to the persons offending hinders his eye from seeing, but because his Son having satisfied his justice for the persons offending, he turns away his eye from seeing their sins. God proclaims himself at once, *The God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means acquit the guilty* (Exod. 34. 7.) There is nothing but the name of his Son, and of his Son suffering, which turns his eye from sin. He will espy and punish, or espy to punish all our faults through all other titles and interests whatsoever.

Again, Mans judgement is clouded by wrath and malice. He cannot see the innocency of those he hates, or do them justice to whom he bears no affection. The want of love hinders an eye of flesh, as much as the inordinacy or excess of it. But though the Lord be angry and displeased with man, yet he wrongs no man. *The wrath of man cannot work the righteousness of God, but the wrath of God works righteousness.* He never gives more then right to those he loves most, nor less then right to those he hates most. That which we call passion in God, is acted with highest reason, his anger never errs.

2. Man is much swayed in judgement: by the power, pomp and splendor of men. We are apt to think they have most worth in them, who are worth most. And that they are good, with whom all's well. Even the Saints are toucht with this infirmity: The Apostle James (Chap. 2. 2 3,) bespeaks them thus, *If there come into your Assembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel, and there come in a poor man in vile rayment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay cloathing, and say unto him, Come and sit here by me in good place, and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my foot-stool; Are ye not partiall in your selves, and Judges of evil thoughts?* that is, are ye not condemned in your selves, and convinced in your own consciences, that you do evil, and so that your thoughts have been evil, which moved you to do so? can you chuse but judge this an evil thought, to think him the best man that weareth the best clothes, and him a vile person that is in vile apparel? thus men, yea good men may mis-judge of men. But the Lord seeth not as man seeth, it is not good clothes, but a good heart; it is not a go'd ring, but a golden conversation which

which he accepts; wickedness is abominable in his eye, though it sit upon a throne; and holiness shines in his eye, though it lye upon a dunghill. Holiness is not less lovely to him, because cloathed with rags, nor unholiness not less loathsome to him, because it goes in a gay coat. 'Tis well conceived that *Job* had reference to his own condition when he spake thus; he lay in a wooll plight, all over sores, and boyls, and filthiness, yet (saith he) *Lord, I know thou seest not as man seeth*; Thou dost not therefore think me the worse, because I am thus ill, I am even a loathing, not only to others, but to my self, yet I know thou dost not loath me; thou hast not a bad opinion of me, because my condition is thus bad.

*Forre Job respicit ad car-
neos iudicium
oculos, qui
ex specie &
carnis splenda-
re iudicant,
sordidos vero
& squalidos
contemnunt.*

*At Deus sordida
& humilia
non despicit.
Sanch.*

3. Man judgeth the cause by the effect, the tree by the fruit, the man by his actions, & a's the way of mans judgement, and so man ought to judge. We ought to think well of them, who do well; and when the hand is clean, charity bids us say the heart is clean too. But *the Lord seeth not as man seeth*; he in judging men transcends the rule, he gives men to judge by. He judgeth the fruit by the tree, the effect by the cause, and the action by the man; he had respect to *Abel*, and then to his offering. If the worker please him not, neither doth his work; as he makes so he sees the tree good, and then the fruit good. Till the man mends, his manners never mend in Gods esteem. When a good tree brings forth evil fruit, or an evil tree good fruit, 'tis accidentall to them both, not natural. God judgeth us by what we alwayes are, not by what we sometimes act either in good, or evil.

In this sense *Job* comforts himself, that whatsoever fruit he might seem to bring forth, yet the Lord judged him not (as his freinds did) by some unfavoury speeches that came from him, but by the favouriness of that spirit which was in him. He knew God judged him by the settled temper of his inward man, and the soundness of his minde, not by the casuall distemper of his outward man, or the sound of his tongue. *Job* was a good tree, and *the root of the matter was in him*. And *Job* was assured God would not condemn him for his fruit, if some of it were bitter and unpleasant, while he saw his root was good.

4. Man must take time to hear and discusse every case, to find and beat out the truth of every controverlie, but God judgeth all at an instant; the matter is no sooner before him, but

he knoweth it fully : indeed the matter was ever before him, and ever fully known, he knew it from eternity : *things are known to him before they are, by whom all things are.* The Lord needeth not to put questions, or to be informed by confessions. God is able to prevent our questions with resolutions, and to give us answers before we give him our doubts (*Job. 16. 30.*) Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee; he that is acquainted with our doubts before we propose them, can answer them as soon as we propose them. Seeing it is thus (saith *Job*) why am I held so long upon the rack to draw out the matter from me? I know thou dost not judge me as man judgeth, by enquiring into or comparing circumstances and actions, answers and questions. Thou art able to make out a judgment of me and of my condition from thy own knowledge, without the contribution of my answers to thy questions, or of other mens testimonies concerning my actions, *Thou seest not as man seeth.*

Est aliquando
despicere, &
cernere cum
contemptu.

Lastly, To have eyes of flesh, and to see as man, is to see with scorn, or with disdain. The original word which we translate to see, put alone, signifies sometimes to despise. The Prince of Ty-
rus is threatned thus (*Ezek. 28. 17.*) *I will lay thee before Kings, that they may behold* (that is, despise and deride) *thee;* And the Spouse in the *Canticles* (*Chap. 1. 6.*) deprecates, *Look not upon me, because I am black, because the Sun hath looked upon me;* that is, God hath looked upon me with a scorching eye of displeasure, and made me black with troubles, do not ye look upon me with a scornful eye of disdain, because of my blackness. Thus God seeth or looketh not as man seeth; he looketh not disdainfully upon a poor afflicted soul, as men do upon their friends in their affliction, or as ye my friends do upon me in mine affliction.

This is the fourth dishonourable thought, which *Job* removeth from God. *His eyes are not eyes of flesh, he seeth not as man seeth,* either in reference to the truth or manner, the clearness or speediness, the certainty or impartiality, the infallibility or charity of his judgment. Upon all which his former request is again to be inferred, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

He proceedeth to a fifth, which he also by way of interrogation removeth from God, and so virtually reneweth the same petition.

Verse 5. *Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? Are thy years as mans dayes?*

I know they are not.

Are thy dayes as mans dayes?

Some interpreters take the word *day* for judgment, *Are thy daies as mans dayes?* that is, are thy judging dayes, or thy judgment given upon those dayes, like mans dayes, or the judgment which man giveth? We have the word in that sense (1 Cor. 4. 3.) where the Apostle concludes in his own case, *It is a very small thing with me to be judged of you, or of mans judgment*; the Greek is, *To be judged of mans day*: and according to the idiom of that language in some countryes, the day of a man is put for the judgment of a man. Though others conceive that *Paul* calls it a day rather than a judgment, in allusion to that last day, wherein God will sit in judgment upon the whole world. So the meaning of *Job* is plainly this, *The Lords judgment is not like mans judgment*; This Exposition falls in with the sense of the former verse, men judge by outward proofs and probabilities, by questions and interrogatories, by testimonies and witnesses: God needs none of these humane helps in his day of judgment; yet in *Jobs* case he carried it, as if he needed them. The suit depending so long before him, and such variety of experiments and tryals, being put upon, or taken of him.

But, we may better interpret *dayes* for a part of time; and so, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* is, *Art thou short-liv'd as man is?* The word *Man*, signifies man in his worst condition, *Are thy dayes like the dayes of a weak man?* of a miserable sickly man? Are they like the dayes of a man, whom we number among the dead, and who is giving up the Ghost every hour? There are some men, whom we call *long-liv'd*, that is, men who in probability may live very long: we say of a healthy strong man, we would take a lease of his life, or if we were to take a lease for lives, we would put his life in for one: he is a man of a good complexion and constitution, a man like to live, and see many dayes. But, saith *Job*, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of Enosh?* As the dayes of a weak sickly man, as the dayes of one, who looks as if he would drop into the grave every day; as the dayes of a very borderer upon death, of the next neighbour, and heir apparent to the King of terrors? Lord,

N n n 2

I am

Ponitur dies pro judicio ex Ciliis idiomatismo. Hieron. Putarim Paulum potius diem maluisse dicere, quam judicium, ut alluderet ad diem illum supremum in quo Dominus ipse judex sedebit. Bez.

Enos cujus vite duratio brevissima & pene nulla.

I am sure thy dayes are not ^{as} the dayes of such a weakling, of such mouldring, ^{sickly} clod of earth. This sense may have a double reference.

*Perstat Job in
excludenda ig-
norantia à Deo
iudice; Dies
hominis signi-
ficant vitam
brevissimam,
quæ cum multa
ignorantia
conjuncta est.
Sanct.
Ars longa,
vita brevis.
Hippocr.*

1. To the knowledge of God concerning *Job*.

2. To the manner of Gods dealing with *Job*.

1. *Thy dayes are not as the dayes of man*, thou hast had, and hast time enough to gather knowledge and experience, if thou didst need such help to make thee more knowing. It was the ancient complaint of that great *Physitian*, when he saw how much of his art he had to learn, and how little time he had to learn it in, *Art is long, and time is short*, what can I learn in such a span-long life as mine? Hence it is conceived that though the fathers before the flood (some of whose lives reached eight or nine Centuries) wanted the help of *Lybraries* and *Academies*, which we enjoy; yet, that by the experience of so many years, they gathered a great flock of knowledge, and proved men of eminent learning. Men whose dayes are not as the dayes of ordinary men, attain knowledge beyond ordinary men. How then can the Lord want any perfection of the most perfect knowledge, who numbred not only by hundreds and thousands of years, but by an eternity of years. His knowledge must needs be full, concerning the state both of things and persons, who not only hath *Antiquity of dayes*, but is the *Ancient of dayes* (*Dan. 7. 9.*) Many men have lived so many dayes, that they are justly called *Ancient*, but no man ever lived or shall live so long, as to deserve this title, *Ancient of dayes*. God is called the *Ancient of dayes*, not only because he hath been many dayes, yea all the dayes that ever have been, but because he is *ancienter then dayes*; *He is the dayes ancient, for he made the day*. *His dayes cannot be like mans days, who made five dayes ancienter then man*. God hath more then all dayes, therefore he hath all knowledge: he hath all experience, therefore he hath neither ignorance nor nescience. Upon this ground *Job* argues it out with God, that he must needs know all things, who was before all times; and that he was acquainted with him better then all men, who lived at that day, because he lived and was acquainted with what would be, before man had a day, even from eternity.

2. These words, *Thy dayes are not as mans dayes*, may refer to the dealings of God with *Job*; As if he had said, *Lord, why then dost thou make such haste to enquire after me? why dost thou so incessantly follow me with afflictions? why dost thou keep me upon the*

rack

rack from day to day, night and day, and wilt give me no rest? Lord, thou needest not fear to lose time, for thou hast all time at thy command: thou canst not want opportunity, who hast eternity. The reason why man is called upon so earnestly, to redeem the time, is, because he hath so little time given him, and no time at all, but what is given him. His dayes are short dayes, and they are but few, and (which should provoke him more to haste) he knows not how few; unless he lay hold upon the present day, he is not sure of any day. But Lord, thou art Lord of time, and Master not only over thy work, but also over thy dayes, thou canst allow thy self as many dayes as thou pleasest to do thy work in. Why then dost thou deal thus severely with me, as if thou wert afraid thou shouldst overslip thy day, or want a season to deal with me in.

Again, when he saith, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* it may refer to the Changes which happen in the dayes of man: the dayes of man are sometimes fair, and sometimes cloudy, sometimes he hath good dayes, and sometimes he hath ill dayes, therefore he must take his time, and lay hold upon his opportunity. He must make his hay while the Sun shines, who cannot command the Sun to shine. But the dayes of the Lord are (like himself) alwayes the same, alwayes alike. *There are no changes of time to him, who is himself unchangeable.*

Lastly, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* may have reference to man himself: man is as mutable a creature, as his time is; and man is mutable, not only in his condition, but in his affection: now he loveth, anon he hateth; now he rejoiceth, anon he sorroweth; now he esteemeth, anon he rejecteth; now he imbraceth, anon he contemneth, Lord (saith Job) I know thou art not in thy dayes as man is in his; where thou art once a freind, thou art alwayes a freind; whom thou lovest thou lovest for ever. Thy affections are as unchangeable as thy nature.

There is a difference in the latter clause of the verse, for where as he saith in the first, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* in the second he saith, *Are thy years as mans dayes?* The dayes of God in the first part, are the same with the years of God in the second. But man hath not years ascribed to him in the second. The time of man is so short that it is reckoned by the shortest compleat time, a day. And when David computes the longest date of mans life, he doth not say, *The years of man are threescore years and ten,* but the dayes of our years are threescore years and ten (Ps. 90. 10.)

There

Deo nihil
affert novi
craflina dies.

Aliam suarum
miseriarum
causam exclu-
dit à Deo. q. d.
si non esset
firma Dei vo-
luntas, atq;
benevolentia
erga suos, sed
innata illi es-
set inconstan-
tia, nihil
mirum esset si
me, quem
quondam in-
gentibus bene-
ficiis cumu-
lavit odio
prosequatur.

old.
בְּיָמַי נָנִי

There is yet another difference in the originall about the word *man*. In the first clause the Hebrew word for man was *Enosh*, here it is *Geber*, which signifies a strong man, a mighty man, a man of the most masculine spirit, and strongest body, of the most vigorous abilities, and greatest probabilities to live long. A man of brass, and heart of oak, rather then of clay, and dust of the earth, *Lord, thy dayes are not only not as the dayes of Enosh, a weak, sickly man, but, Thy years are not as the dayes of Geber, as the dayes of the mightiest and healthiest, of the strongest and stoutest among the sons of men.*

Observe hence more distinctly the difference between the dayes of God, and the dayes of man.

First, *Gods day is the day of eternity.*

Mans dayes are but dayes of time. God is said, *To inhabit eternity* (Isa. 57. 15.) that is, he is fixed in eternity, he is without beginning and without end, yea his dayes are without succession of dayes. All the dayes of God are but a day. Not only are a thousand years to him as one day, but eternity is to him as one day. All that God doth is said to be done *to day*; *Thou art my son, to day have I begotten thee* (Psal. 2. 7.) yet he speaks (say some) of the eternal generation of the Son: or, as it referreth to the resurrection of Christ (so the Apostle expounds it, *Acts 13. 33.*) God calls that time, *To day*, though it came a long time after: all is present with God; *Past and to come in relation to God, is neither past, nor to come, all is now or to day.* That was not past to God which never had beginning, the eternall generation of his Son: nor was that to *come* to God which was alwayes before him: The temporall resurrection of his Son, *Today have I begotten thee*, is the most proper stile for God.

*Tempus est
mensura homi-
num habens
principium &
finem; viter-
nitas est
Angelorum
principium ha-
bens, sed non fi-
nem; eternitas
est propria
Deo, nec prin-
cipium habens,
nec finem.*

Some distinguish thus between these three, *Eternity, Eternity, Eviternity* and *Time*. *Eternity* is that which is peculiar unto God, his are the dayes of eternity. *Eviternity* is proper to Angels and spirits, which have a beginning, but shall have no end. *Time* is the portion and lot of man, who hath had a beginning, and shall have an end. *Time* is the measure of those things, which actually corrupt and change. *Eviternity* is the measure of things incorruptible and unchangeable, not in themselves, but by the appointment of God. *Eternity* is peculiar to God, in whom it is absolutely impossible any change should be. *Time* hath continual successions, eternity a constant permanency, eviternity partakes of both. Hence

The

The ſecond difference, Man dayes are moveable, the dayes of God move not.

Thirdly, mans dayes being paſt cannot be recalled; Gods day is ever within his call, for, that which is paſt is as much preſent to him, as that which is preſent; and that which is to come is as much preſent to him, as that which is. *Mans day was, is, and ſhall be, Gods day alwayes is; his name is, I am; It was, and it will be, are diviſions and fragments, morſels and bits of time, eternity is an It is.*

*Æternitas eſt
quæ nihil ha-
bet mutabile,
ibi nihil eſt
præteritum
quæſi jūm non
ſit, nihil fu-
turum quæſi
nondum ſit,
quia non eſt
ibi niſi eſt,
Aug. in Pſ.
101.*

This teacheth us; Firſt,

That God hath time enough to do his work in.

His dayes are not as mans dayes. He needs not haſten his work, leſt he ſhould loſe his opportunity who is poſſeſſed of eternity. And

Secondly, This (by the way) ſheweth us the infinite happineſs and unconceivable bleſſedneſs of God; *His dayes are not as mans dayes;* one of mans dayes carrieth away one comfort, and the next a ſecond; this day brings one comfort, and the next a ſecond: and ſo he looſeth or receiveth his comforts by dayes and by dayes, by the fluxes and refluxes of time. God hath all his happineſs in eternity, that is, he hath all at once. Time neither bringeth nor carrieth away from God. He enjoyeth as much at this preſent, whatever he had, as what he hath at this preſent; and he enjoyes as much as what ſhall be, as he doth what is preſent; he enjoyeth all at once. God hath not one thing after another, but all together. Eternity is the longeſt in duration, and the ſhorteſt in fruition; not that the enjoyment of any thing there is ſhort, but becauſe in the ſhorteſt enjoyment there is all; Every moment of eternity being filled with all the bleſſedneſs of eternity.

*Erat & erit
nō ſibi temporis
fluxusq; natu-
ræ ſegmenta
ſunt.
Æternitas eſt
ſemper et im-
mutabile eſſe.*

Thirdly, This ſhews the reaſon why the Lord taketh ſuch leiſure to do his work; he doth not precipitate or thruſt on his deſignes, becauſe he may take what time he will. God hath all time at his command. Men bear ſway and rule over perſons and places, God only ruleth times. Man hath not one day in his power, not only not the day to come, but not the day preſent. *Go to now* (ſaith the Apoſtle James Chap. 4. 13, 14.) *ye that ſay to day, or to morrow we will go into ſuch a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get gain, whereas ye know not what ſhall be on the morrow;* Nor indeed doth any man know whether he ſhall be on the

the

the morrow, or on all the day wherein he is: God can boast of to morrow, that is, of eternity, or of all time to come. Man cannot boast of to morrow, that is, of the next day, no nor of the next time to come of the same day. Hence it is that man must hasten, lest he miss his season. When *David* had *Saul* at an advantage (*1 Sam. 24. 5.*) they about him advise him to make use of it, and not let it slip, *Behold the day, of which the Lord said unto thee, &c.* So having such a day, take hold of it; if you let this go, you may never see such another. Time is no part of the dominion of Kings. So likewise *Abishai* counsels *David* upon the same advantage (*1 Sam. 26. 8.*) *God hath delivered thy enemy into thine hand this day* (Let him go this day, and probably thou shalt never have the like day again) *Now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time. I can dispatch him at one time, and possibly thou shalt not have a second time.* In a good work, it is good, yea 'tis best to do our work at once, and not to expect (what we may, or may never have) a second time, when we have a time. *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.* He hath much hardness, but no wisdom in his heart, who hopes to do that good to morrow, which he resolves to neglect untill to morrow. A wise man may hope to do that to morrow, which he cannot do to day, but it is high 't folly to resolve upon a neglect of any duty this day upon a hope of doing it next day. It is said, *Revel. 12. 6.* *Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, because the devil is come down, having great wrath, (why so angry?) because he knoweth that his time is but short.* When the devil knows he hath but a little time, he will do as much work as he can, and do it presently, he sees all will scape out of his hands else. Only the Lord hastens not, neither needeth he to hasten his work at any time up this ground, because he hath but a short time. He can take what time he will, and make his day as long, and his dayes as many as himself ple. seth, for the actings of his counsels, whether to punish or to shew mercy. And hence it is that he delayeth, till wicked profane spirits wonder, yea scoff at his delay, and think, surely the Lord will never do any such thing as he hath threatned or promised, because he stayeth so long before he doth it; whereas indeed to him that inhabiteth eternity, deferment is no delay, though to us it seem so, whose times are measured out by inches and hours, by moments and by minutes. Those profane wretches (*Isa. 5. 19.*) call the Lord, and provoke him to action, *Let him*
make

make speed and hasten his work, that we may see it. The Lord appears slow and slack to many men, but *the Lord is not slack as some men count slackness* (2 Pet. 3. 9.) Men think he is slack, when he is only patient, and themselves ignorant, *That a thousand years to the Lord are but as one day*; God doth not measure time by our pole, nor cast it up by our Arithmetick. Eternity doth not only, like the unjust steward, bid us write, *fifty for an hundred, but one for a thousand*, and (which bears the disproportion of divers hundreds in every one of that thousand) one day for a thousand years. Time is not only a small thing, but nothing unto God, *Mine age* (saith David) *is nothing unto thee* (Psal. 39. 5.) *And if all Nations before him are as nothing, if they are counted to him less then nothing* (Isa. 40. 17.) Then not only the age of man, but the ages of all men added together, are before him as nothing, and are counted to him less then nothing. Surely he cannot want time to do all things, before whom all things are nothing. He cannot want time to pour out his judgements and to empty the vials of his wrath upon wicked men, nor can he want time to fulfil his promises, and to make good every word of blessing which he hath spoken to, or concerning his own people; Wicked men! Doe not ye hope; Godly men! Do not ye fear, God will not doe what he hath said, because he hath not already done it. He hath not lost his time or season, because he hath not accepted that, which ye thought to be the time or season. Christ warns his Disciples (John 9. 4.) to make haste about their work, for the night (namely of death) cometh wherein no man can work; while you have the day, doe your work, for I know what day yours is, your day will be gone, and the night will come, then you can work no more: But Gods day fears no night, what ever comes he can do his work. The Preacher gives the same counsel upon the same ground (Eccles. 9.) *Whatsoever thine hands finde to do, do it with all thy might*; lay hold on the fore-lock of time, why? *There is no wisdom or counsel in the grave whither thou goest*; When thou diest there is an end of all thy working time; doe thy work well, for thou canst not recall a day of thy life to mend thy work in, neither canst thou work at all in that night of death. The Lords day knows nothing of a grave, nor is his Sun acquainted with going down; if he seem slack to his work, or slack at his work this day and the next, &c. yet he hath another day at his call, and after that another and another, all which are to him but one day.

day. Therefore he takes or leaves, defers or hastens, comes or goes at pleasure. *Are thy dayes, O Lord, as mans dayes? Are thy years as the dayes of man?* I know they are not.

But why doth *Job* make so many of these negative queries?

The next words will answer.

Verse 6. *That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin.*

Here's the reason of those former Questions. As if he had said, Lord, surely thou needest not search and examine me in this manner, seeing it is neither thus nor thus with thee, It is not good to thee to oppress or to despise the work of thy hands, thou hast not eyes of flesh or dayes of man.

That thou enquirest after mine iniquity.

שׁוּב
Significat non
tam verbis &
interrogatione,
quam oblatione
bus & summo
studio aliquid
inquirere; &
non raro de pœ-
nis et nece pro-
curanda acci-
pitur.

The Original signifies an enquiry two wayes. 1. By word. 2. By actions. By somewhat done, or by somewhat spoken. And it signifies both to do and speak with great intention and heat of spirit. The word is also applyed to those enquiries which are made by torture, when the party is suspected for concealment of the matter under enquiry. Which way of examination is called by the Latines, the bringing of a man to question. That last Engine, which was invented to support the tottering state of Rome, wherein poor souls are put to extream tortures, to force confessions or self accusations (that I say) is called the *Inquisition*, and the Judges *Inquisitors*; because inquisition or enquiry (according to the word of the Text) is there made after the iniquities of men, after their supposed heresies and heretical practices against the *Romish* Church. *Job* seems to allude to such wayes of examination; why doth the Lord enquire after mine iniquity, by sore judgments and terrible afflictions, by strong pains and mighty terrours?

At lowest, the word signifies a diligent search, or a scrutiny with utmost industry; even such as they use who maliciously hunt for the precious life. The Lord saith to *Moses*, return into *Ægypt*, for all the men which sought thy life are dead (*Exod. 4. 19.*) It is this word. So (*1 Sam. 22. 23.*) abide thou with me (saith *David* to *Abiathar*) fear not, for he that seeketh my life, seeketh thy life. When revenge makes a search, it is a diligent search: malice with a piercing eye, and enquires narrowly. That gracious promise

mise is thus expressed (Jer. 50. 20.) *In those dayes the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found.* Job complains here, *Thou enquirest after mine iniquity*; there the promise is, *In those dayes the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, or, enquired after, and it shall not be found*; that is, suppose the iniquity of Israel should be sought after, suppose there should be an hue and cry sent out after the sin of my people, yet, saith the Lord, it shall not be found, why, what hinders the finding of it, or where shall it be hid? The next words resolve the doubt, it shall be hid in the pardoning mercies of God: *I the Lord will pardon those whom I reserve*; The Lord would give such a full and free pardon of sin, that what search and enquiry soever should be made after it, there should not be so much as any scar or mark, not so much as any print or stain left, to be a witness of their sin, or a plea for their condemnation. Answerable to that (Rom. 8. 1.) *There is no condemnation to them that are in Chr st Jesus.* Job speaks as if God were so far from hiding his iniquity in a pardon, when it came to be searched for, that himself searched for it, as if he were resolved not to pardon ii. *Wherefore is it that thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?*

Both Parts of the Verse meet in the same sense. The word (*Darash*) in the latter, being often applyed as the former to a judi-
 ciliary search; yet some distinguish them strictly thus: the former to signifie an enquiry by calling to memory, or the examining of our selves, *Thou enquirest after mine iniquity*, that is, thou askest thy self, whether thou hast not observed some iniquity in me, Thou dost (as it were) rub up thy memory, and take an account of what is laid up there concerning me. Memory is the store-house or treasury, the Record or Register of the soul. *Books are a memory without us, and a memory is a book within us.* Then the other word signifies searching by examination of the suspected Party in either of those wayes before explained. The Lord tells the Jewes (whose wickedness was grown immodest, and rose a step beyond hypocrisie) that he needed not search after their sins, *in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of poor innocents, I have not found it by secret search*, Jer. 2. 34. as noting, that the Lord doth sometimes make a secret search, and that there are some who hide their sins, some who sit close upon, and cover them, as Rachel did the stolne Idols, when Laban came to search

וַיִּשְׁאָל

Est inquirere in peccatorem per testes & judicariam questionem.

Quereve notat scientiam Dei, & denotat animadversionem. & vindictam, Dirash a Bakkash distingui potest, si illud in revocatione ad animum, hoc in scrutatione occultorum peccatorum.

*Sententia plana
est, non est ne-
cesse, ut in pec-
cata mea curi-
osius inquiras,
cum deus sit
cui nota sunt et
perspecta omnia,
etiam interiora
cordis.*
Bold,

Jacobs stuff: that there are some who make excuses and apologies for them: to these the Lord comes with a secret search for their iniquity. The word in *Jeremy* signifies digging; I have not found it by digging: some put their sins under ground; only deep digging can find these out. *Job* enquires of the Lord, why he made such a searching after his iniquities, why he was so curious in looking into every corner, and behind every door, to find out the rubbish of his life, seeing the closest sin is as open to his eye as the Sun at noon-day; and besides, God knew that *Job* had no close sins, no darling beloved sin in his bosom, no sweet morsels of any forbidden fruit under his tongue. He tells the Lord as much in plain terms in the next words, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* As we use to say to a man that makes a busie search after any thing, either in a place or about a person, where there is no probability that it should be found; or when we suppose the party searching cannot yave the least ground of perswasion, that the thing is there, or with him; In such a case (I say) a man will answer, why do ye make such a search? ye know what ye look for is not here, ye know well enough I have it not, ye have some other ends in this. Thus *Job* speaks here, Lord, *why doest thou search for mine iniquity. Thou knowest well enough that I am not wicked, there is certainly somewhat else in the winde: Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

Take a note or two from these words, *That thou enquirest after mine iniquity &c.*

First, *God knoweth us before he searcheth us.*

Job professeth of himself as a Judge (Chap. 26. 16.) *The cause which I know not I searched out, but God searches out those causes which he knows.* God doth not search us that he may know us, or to inform himself, but to make us know him and our selves. There are not many, who know themselves at all, there are none who know themselves enough. The Lord searches us, that we may search our selves. There are not many who know God at all, there are none who know God enough; God searches us that we may seek after him. By every affliction the Lord would make us know our selves, and himself better. It is said of *Manasseh*, when he was in the bryars, *That, then Manasseh knew the Lord, and then* (doubtless) *he began to know himself.* *The same light that brings us to the knowledg of what God is, brings us also to the knowledg of what our selves are.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Observe,

Afflictions are searchers.

Thou searchest for mine iniquity, saith Job. Job supposed that the Lord came to try him, and to find out the bottome of his heart: when God smites our bodies or our estates, he searcheth our hearts, and maketh enquiry in our lives. The Prophet threatens the Jews (*Zeph. 1. 12.*) That God would come and search *Jerusalem with candles*; that is, as some interpret, he would cause the *Chaldeans* to search for their most hidden treasures, and find them out. Others understand it of God himself, searching *Jerusalem*. But God is not like the Woman in the Parable, who had lost her groat, he needeth no candle-light to find out the lost groat, or to find out the filthiness that is in the most secret corners of the heart. The meaning then is, that God would search *Jerusalem*, that is, the people of *Jerusalem*, as exactly, as if they were searched with a Candle; he would bring forth their secret sins, and all their hidden abominations. This search was made by those terrible and sore judgments brought upon *Jerusalem*. God kindled a fire of affliction, and searched them by the light of that fire. Troubles are as so many Candles lighted up to search our selves by, and they will be as so many fires kindled to consume us with, if we search not our selves. At this time God is searching *England* with candles. The Prophet describing the great sorrows of the Jewes in their Captivity, directs us what to do (*Lam. 3. 40.*) *Let us search and try our wayes.* When God is searching us, it is high time for us to search our selves. It is sad, when God is searching for our sins, if we are not searching for them too; and it is more sad, if when God cometh to search for our sins, we be found hiding our sins. These are searching times. God is searching, let us search too; else we may be sure (as *Moses* (*Numb. 32. 23.*) tells the people of *Israel*) our sins will find us out. They who endeavour not to find their sins, shall be found by their sins, *Our iniquity will enquire after us, if we enquire not after it.* But what if iniquity enquire after us? What? if iniquity enquire after us, it will find us; and if iniquity find us, trouble will find us, yea, if iniquity find us alone without Christ, Hell and Death will find us. If iniquity find any man, he hath reason enough to say unto it (what *Ahab* said to *Eliab* without reason) *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy.* The best of men have reason to look out what is evil in them, when God brings

*Quam minuta-
tim cognoscam
de peccatis po-
puli, & cum
eo iniboratio-
nes meas accu-
ratissime ut so-
lunt qui adhibi-
tis lucernis
perlustrant om-
nia.* Jun.

bringse vill upon them, or wraps them up in common evils. They who have no wickedness in them to cast them under condemnation, have yet sin enough in them to make them smart under correction. Though Job could say from the testimony of a pure conscience, *Thou knowest I am not wicked*; yet he durst not say, thou knowest I have not sinned. Job acknowledged he was sinful, and God knew he was not wicked. In searching after iniquity, he found not hypocrisie, yea he knew he was not an hypocrite before he searched him. So it follows

Verse 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.*

Continet ver-
sus septimus, id
quod præcipue
in hac causa
est disputatio-
ne spectandum
est, sc. Jobum
non esse impro-
bum. Pined.

This 7. verse containeth one of the chiefest questions of that grand controversie handled in this Book, whether Job were a wicked man or no? Satan represented him for such to God; and therefore called that he might be tried: the Lord tryed him upon that challenge, and he was brought to a grievous tryal; Job appeals to the Lords own knowledge, and is contented to stand or fall according to his determination, being yet assured, that he stood right in the thoughts of God. *Thou knowest I am not wicked.*

תוֹכַח לְךָ
Apud scire tuū
est. Multo plus
dicit per hanc
phrasin apud
scire tuum est,
quam si diceret
tu scis.
In scientia tua
est, penes noti-
tiam tuam est,
non aliunde, sed
ex te optime
nosli me non
esse improbum.
Drus.
Hæret in vege-
nitis peccatū,
improbi tamen
dici, nec pos-
sunt, nec de-
bent. Mer.

Thou knowest.

The Hebrew is rendered word for word, thus, *It is upon thy knowledge, or, it is upon thy know that I am not wicked.* As if he had said, *Thou hast not this knowledge from without, thou dost not ground thy judgment concerning the state of any man upon what others say of him, upon reports or hear-sayers; no, thy knowledg is from thy self; thou knowest upon thine own knowledge, thine is an internal, an immediate, and so a perfect, an infallible knowledge, and that tells thee of me, I am not wicked.*

That I am not wicked.

He doth not say, *Thou knowest that I am not a sinner, or, Thou knowest that I have not sinned.* Job had no such opinion of himself, and he knew God had no such knowledge of him. There is a great difference between being a sinner, and a wicked man. The best of Saints while they are here upon the earth are sinners; but the worst of Saints even here upon the earth are not wicked; they have a new nature, they are new creatures, regenerate and born

born again by the Word and Spirit, therefore they are not wicked; though much sin be in them, yet no wickedness is in them; and they are denominated from their better part, not wicked from their remaining corruption, but holy from their received renovation, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

Again, the word in the originall being in the Verb, we may translate (as many do) *Thou knowest that I have not done wickedly.* But the sense is the same, for every man is in doing as he is in being; he that is not wicked in his state cannot act wickedly. So we must understand that of the Apostle John (1 Epist. 3.8.) *He that committeth sin is of the devil.*

Thirdly, *To be wicked* is ordinarily opposed to *our being just*; and so, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, is, *Thou knowest that I am not condemned or cast at thy bar, for a wicked man.* I am not condemned, but justified in thy sight. In which sense the word is used in that prophetick curse against Judas, who betrayed Christ (Psal. 109. 7.) *When he shall be judged, let him be condemned:* so we render it; the Hebrew is elegantly translated thus, *When he shall be judged let him go out wicked*; that is, let him go out from before the bar and tribunall of his Judges, a condemned man, or, *Let him proceed wicked.* Let that be his title and his honour. *Wicked and just* are judiciary or Court-terms, equivalent with *justified and condemned.*

כִּי-לֹא
אָרְשָׁע

Quod non im-
pie egerim.
Mont.

Ewear impre-
bus.

Improbis et ju-
stus verba sunt
forensia.

Some joyn these words with the verse going before, *Dost thou search into mine iniquity that thou mayst know whether I am wicked?* As if he had said, *Lord, thou needest not make enquiry about this thing, for as I am not wicked, so thou art not ignorant: Thou hast not afflicted me, because I am wicked, nor hast thou searched me, because thou art ignorant, Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* Hence Observe,

First, *That the Lord knowes the state of every man, and of every thing exactly.*

The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, *The Lord knoweth them that are his* (2 Tim. 2. 19.) and he knoweth them that are not his: not his by the grace of election and regeneration: for all are his by the right of creation and dominion. Thus he knows all the fowls of the mountains, and the beasts of the field are his (Psal. 50. 11.) David gives this glory to God in his own case (Psal. 139. 1.) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me; God did not search him to know him, but he searched him*
and

and knew him. The knowledge of God was not a consequent, but a concomitant of that search; or it is spoken in opposition to man; a man may search his neighbour, and yet not know him. There are depths and turnings in the heart of man, which no man can reach or find out; but God hath a thread which will lead him into all and thorow all the Labyrinths, a Line which will sound all the depths of man. Hence David makes a particular of the knowledge of God; God knew him in all that he was, and in all that he did, *Thou knowest my down-lying and my up-rising, and thou art acquainted with all my wayes.* God is the Judge of all men, therefore he knows all men, Heb. 4. 13. *There is no creature which is not manifest in his sight, all things are naked and open before him, with whom we have to do.* The Apostle by two Metaphors in these words teaches us, that as the out-members and lineaments of the body, together with their beauty or deformity are clearly seen, when the body is naked and unclothed, that as the bowels and intrails of the body, together with their soundness or diseases are perfectly discovered, when the body is dissected or cut up by the hand of a skilful Anatomist, even so are we in all we do, and in all we are perfectly known, or as the same Apostle speaks (2 Cor. 5. 11.) *manifest unto God*, even manifest with as much clearness to the knowledge of God, as the light is to the eye of man. He knows, 1. Our persons. 2. Our actions. 3. He knoweth the manner of our actions: 4. He knows with what hearts we act. 5. He knoweth not only the means we use, but the ends we propose in every action. 6. He knoweth what we have been as well as what we are. And 7. He knoweth what we will be, as well as what we are or have been; He knoweth what we have done, as well as what we do; and he knoweth what we will do, as well as what we do or have already done. He seeth all creatures in the glass of his own counsels thorow and thorow. His eye hath thorow lights in all parts of the world, and in the hearts of all men in the world.

And seeing man cannot be hid from God, it is the vaineſt attempt for any man to think of hiding himself from God; yet that is not only the attempt, but the hope of many, who while they do what they would not have seen, please themselves with this conceit, that they are not seen in doing it, or that they can secure what they have done from being seen. We learn'd this of our first parents, in whom the first thing that appeared (next their

γυνή & τε-
τετραλιόμην.

their ſhame) after they had ſinned, was the hiding of their ſin. Man loveth to draw a curtain between God and himſelf, to raiſe up artificial darkneſs, and to walk in thick clouds (as he vainly hopes) undiscovered.

Again, Doth God know us? then let us labour to know our ſelves. God knows who are wicked; many are wicked and know it not. It is a woful miſtake, when we think our ſelves to be in a good eſtate; and God knows us to be in a bad eſtate! It is a wrong to God and our ſelves, when God knows us to be in a good eſtate, and we think our ſelves to be in a bad Eſtate, but it is far worſe, when we think our eſtate good, and God knows it to be bad. We ſhould be acquainted with our condition, leſt we (like *Laodicea*) flatter our ſelves into an opinion that we are rich and cloathed, and have need of nothing, when God knows we are poor and naked, and wanting all things.

Secondly, Obſerve from the elegancy of the Hebrew expreſſion. *It is upon thy knowledge that I am not wicked.*

God knoweth all things in and of himſelf.

This gives glory to God, and liſteth him up above the creature in the fullneſs of his knowledge. Men who have the greateſt knowledge, and vaſteſt comprehenſions of things, yet have not that knowledge in and from themſelves, they fetch it in by borrowed helps, and glad they can have it ſo too. It coſts man a great deal of travel and ſtudy, to make himſelf maſter of a little knowledge (*Job 12. 12.*) *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes is underſtanding*: Some indeed get wiſdom and underſtanding, and are owners of a vaſt ſtock and treasure of knowledge; but when? but how? When they are old, when they have had long experience, and have ſtudied hard for it, *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes is underſtanding*: Thus men get knowledge. But mark what is ſaid of God in the next words (*verſ. 13.*) *But with him (meaning God) is wiſdom and ſtrength, He hath counſel and underſtanding. With him it is, and he bath it*: The Lord doth not grow more knowing by years, nor doth his underſtanding mend by the multitude of dayes: though he be the *Ancient of dayes*, yet it is not his antiquity which hath got him this knowledg; his knowledg is in him, and with him, and from himſelf; he fetches not his knowledge from ſence, nor doth he take it up by information; He learns it not by demonſtration raiſed from the things themſelves, nor by the collation of

one thing with another. He doth not know this to be so, because that is so, but all things are so, because he knows them. He knows all, 1. Fully, not to halves. 2. Certainly, not probably. 3. Actually, not possibly. 4. At once, not successively; as not one thing by another, so not one thing after another. Such are the eminencies, and transcendencies of the knowledge of God.

The Scripture speaks sometimes as if God derived his knowledge from report, or as if he did not know whether a people were wicked or no, till he had enquired. When the new world was building their *Babel*, the Lord said, *Let us go down to see the City* (Gen. 11. 5.) And when *Sodom* was burning in Lust, the Lord resolved, *I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me, and if not, I will know* (Gen. 18. 21.)

In both these places of Scripture God comes down to our capacity, but he comes not down to any place in the world. He needs not come any where, who is every where. God speaks after the manner of men: but he acts not after the manner of men. God gives us an example what we should do, he doth not work after our example. Lest we should judge before we see, God saith, *I will go down and see, before I judge*: lest we should censure one another upon fumes and common cries without further enquiry, whether it be so or no, therefore the Lord saith, *I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry that is come unto me*. God knew *Sodom* was wicked, before he came down, but he came down to make it known, that he knew it.

As those Scriptures seem to import that God knew not how wicked the builders of *Babel* were, or the dwellers in *Sodom*, till he took pains to enquire; So another Scripture imports, that he did not know *Abraham* was a godly man, till he made an experiment of it, by putting him upon that hard piece of obedience, the offering up of his son, *Now I know thou fearest me* (Gen. 22. 12.) as if the Lord had collected his knowledge of what *Abraham* was, from what *Abraham* did. But that testimony of God, *Now I know*, is but now I have made it known, or, now I know that in the fruit, which I knew before in the root; Now I see my fear in thy works, as before I saw it in thy faith. That place (Deut. 8. 2.) bears a like sense; where *Moses* bespeaks *Israel* thus, *Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these*
fourty

fourty years in the wilderness to humble thee, and prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his Commandments or no. The Lord needed not fourty years no nor one minutes experience to make up his thoughts concerning that people; he knew what they were at first sight, and what they would prove (even a stubborn, an unbelieving and a back-sliding people) before they were, God proved them, not to know what was in their hearts, but that we might know it: that, what he knew by his internal, immediate inspection, others also might know by external observation. It would not have been believed, that they were so bad, if God had not drawn it out by that fourty years variety of his dispensations towards them. Or Moses describes God after the manner of men, who prove things that they may know them, whereas indeed God knows, and then proves them.

Thirdly, Considering how Job comes in with this assurance [*Thou knowest that I am not wicked*] to relieve himself in his distress, we may observe,

That it is matter of highest consolation to the Saints, to know and remember that God knows them.

That God knows their hearts and lives, is the joy of their hearts and lives. How rejoycingly doth David speak (*Psal. 139. 1, 2.*) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me, thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising, &c.* He seems to be as glad that God knew him, as that God would save him. My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high, was Jobs resort again, when his friends scorned him (*chap. 16. 19*) There are no mistakes in God; he will give right evidence, as a witness, and a righteous sentence, as a Judge.

Again, That God knows us, assures us,

First, That what we have done shall not be forgotten; *God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love, &c. Heb. 6. 10.* It assures us,

Secondly, That we shall not be mis-interpreted for what we have done. The reason why many men have so ill an opinion of others, is, because they have so little knowledge of them. Ignorance makes as corrupt glosses, as unsound descisions upon persons and actions, as it doth upon texts or questions. Some pervert knowingly and against light, but most pervert ignorantly and for want of light. God knows us perfectly, and he never acts against his knowledge. It assures us,

Thirdly, that we shall be well accepted and rewarded. Though men make ill requitals, and pay in bad, yea in base coyn, yet every man shall receive of God according to what he is, and what his works are (*Gen. 4. 7.*) *If thou dost well, Shalt thou not be accepted?*

Lastly, It is a comfort to us, while we are uncertain about our own estates, to know that God knoweth us. God hath a better opinion of some men then they have of themselves. Some do not only think, but judge and conclude themselves wicked, when God knoweth that they are not wicked. *The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

Fourthly, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* Then observe, *To do wickedly, or to be wicked is inconsistent with grace.*

If *Job* had been a wicked man, he had been a lost man. Sin is not inconsistent with grace, but wickedness is.

But you will say, What is Wickedness? And when is a man so sinful that he is to be numbred among the wicked? To clear that, because *Job* ventures all upon it.

I answer; first, In every wicked man sin reigneth, that is, sin hath not only a being in him, but dominion over him; he yieldeth ready and free obedience to it, as to his natural Lord, not a forced and involuntary obedience only, as to a tyrant. Our committing of sin gives not the rule to sin: but our submitting to it. As a man may do many good things, and yet grace not reign and rule in his heart, so it is possible for a man to do many evil things, and yet not have sin rule in his heart. A man may lay by the actings of a sin, and yet that be a reigning sin, and a man may fall into the act of sin, and yet that no reigning sin. The reign of sin or of grace are chiefly seen in that professed subjection or resignation of our selves to the dictates and commands of grace or sin. *No man can be at once Gods Son, and sins servant; no nor at once a servant to both.*

Secondly, A wicked man is a customary sinner, he driveth a trade in sin. A godly man (possibly) may commit the same sin again, yet the custom is broken, because he putteth in a plea against sin, and often moveth God for power, not only against, but over it: if he attain not this blessed victory, yet he ceaseth not to complain, and pray, *O wretched man that I am,*
who

who shall deliver me from this body of death? When shall I be delivered from this burden and bondage of corruption? When shall it once be? O that it might once be! Wicked men are so far from pleading against, that they usually plead for their sins; and labour more to make excuses and apologies for them, then to get power and victory over them. They instead of making preparation to resist the lusts of the flesh, make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

Thirdly, A wicked man preserves in himself a purpose to sin, while he seems to pray and protest against his sin. He is (as *Augustine* confessed of himself before his conversion) afraid God should grant his prayer, while he prayeth that his corruptions may be mortified. He may put up prayers against sin, but he puts up no desires against it. As custom is the rode of our lives, so purposes are the rode of our hearts. What a mans purposes are, such the movings of his heart are (*Isa. 56. 12.*) *To morrow shall be as to day, and much more abundant*, say they in their beastly abuse of the creatures, we have been drunk to day, and hope to be more to morrow (*Ezek. 11. 21.*) *Their heart doth go after the heart of their abominable things*; that is, the inclinations and resolutions of their hearts go or walk after their abominations. A godly man sinneth, but he doth not purpose to sin; his purposes are not to sin, holiness is his way; and as sin is it self a by-way, so it is besides his way. The honest Traveller intends to keep straight on to his journeys end; if he miss his way at any time, he misses his purpose. The robber skulks about in by-waies, and comes not into the rode, but to find and seize upon his prey. *Peter* denied Christ, but did *Peter* purpose to deny Christ? No, *Peter* purposed not to deny Christ, yea *Peter* promised not to deny Christ. *Peter* resolved that he would die rather then deny Christ, and yet he denyed Christ; *Peter* did not go out and make a bargain with the Scribes and Pharizees, as *Judas* did, to betray his Master. *Peter* was betrayed when he denied his Master. *Peter* was suddenly attached with a violent temptation & arrested with base fear. He did not deny Christ, because he resolved to do it, but because he resolved so much not to do it, without due dependance upon Christ for power not to do it. A godly man may have some deliberations about sin, yet no resolutions: He may deliberate upon the acting of some sin, when the occasion is given, but he doth not deliberate upon the finding of occasions to provoke him to the acting of sin. *David* did not

go up to his house top to invite an incentive of lust, though he there met with one.

Fourthly, Wickedness carrieth clearness, yea fullness of consent in sin. A wicked man may have many checks at sin from his conscience, but he hath none from his will. And a wicked man may have some motions to good from his conscience, but he hath none from his will. When a wicked man abstains from doing evil, he wills it; and when he doth good, he wills it not. In nature, the act and the consent go both to evil, *I do evil, and I will do it, is the stubborn voice of corrupt nature.* In grace, though the act goes sometimes to evil, yet the consent doth not. *The evil which I would not, that do I, is the mournful voice of grace.* In glory, both act and consent go to good, and neither of them to any evil. *The good which I will, I do, the evil which I would not, I do not, shall be for ever the triumphant voice of glory.* When the Apostle Paul (Rom. 7.) bewailed his own bondage under corruption, he yet professed that what ever evil he did, he consented not to do it. And though there may be some kind of consent in the sinning of a godly man, yet it is not such a consent, as in a wicked man: For as a wicked man, though he may sometimes shew his willingness, and give his consent to do good, to hear the Word, to pray, &c. Yet it is not a clear, a full and free consent, the will never comes up heartily in it: so there may be some kind of consent, a negative consent in a godly mans doing evil, he may not (as to that act) resist or deny; as when a question is put to the vote, a man who doth not affirm, may be said to give some consent; when he suspends his voice, and doth not openly oppose. Thus a godly man when a temptation cometh, never gives a direct yea of consent, yet sometimes not giving his no, there is a kind of consent, a middle act, not a clear or determinate act of consent. Now a wicked man, as he is taken captive by the devil at his will (2 Tim. 2. 26.) that is at Satans will, the devil takes him captive when he pleaseth: so also at his own will, He is pleased to be taken captive by the Devil.

Fifthly, Where there is a wickedness in sinning, there is delight in sin. Pure delight in sin is impurest wickedness. To disobey for nought is the most wicked disobedience, as to serve God for nought is the most holy service. What is it which sheweth the eminency of grace? Is it not the joy which the soul finds in the wayes of grace? When we can delight in the law of God, as his law

*Etiam gratia
malum est mali-
tia mea causa
nulli erat, nisi
malitia Augusti
lib. 3. co. 1. ff.
c. 4.*

law abstracted from ends and fruits. When it is meat and drink to us to do the will of God, though we suffer hunger, and are ready to starve in doing it, here is godliness at the highest: and when any delight in sin as sin, as contrary to the will of God, abstracted from ends and fruits, here is wickedness at the highest. To act in such a degree of sin, is inconsistent with any degree of grace.

Job appeals to the Testimony of God, that he had not sinned in any of these degrees, while he saith, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

Observe, Fifthly, *A Godly man may know that he is so, and be confident of it.*

He that saith, God knoweth he is not wicked, knoweth it himself. For though the Lord hath a knowledge of us beyond ours, though he know us better then we know our selves, yet no man can tell the Lord, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, but he who knows that he is not. The excellency of our condition consists in being godly, the comfort of it consists in knowing that we are godly. When David offers himself to the trial (*Psal. 139. 24.*) *Search me, O Lord, and see if there be any way of wickedness in me*; He speaks not as doubting whether he were wicked or no, but as being assured that he was not. As if he had said, There are many weaknesses in me I know, but I know not of any wickedness. He that offers himself to Gods search for his wickedness, gives a strong argument of his own uprightness. The best of the Saints may be at a loss sometimes for their assurances, and not know they are good. They may stand sometimes hovering between Heaven and Earth, yea between heaven and hell, as uncertain to which they shall be accounted. Yet many of the Saints are fully perswaded they are Saints, and see with Christ in Heavenly places, while they are wandring here upon the earth. A godly man may know this two wayes;

First, By the workings of grace in his heart.

Secondly, By the testimony of the Spirit with his heart.

First, By the workings of grace in his heart (*1 Job. 2. 3.*) *Horely we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments: and (Chap. 3. 14.) We know that we are passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.* There may be such workings of grace in the heart, as may amount to an evidence of grace. *What our being is, is discernable in our workings.* The word is as clear as light,

light, that our justification may have a light or evidence in our sanctification, though no cause or foundation there. Grace is the image of Christ stamped upon the Soul, and they who reflecting upon their souls, see the image of Christ there, may be sure that Christ is theirs. Christ hath given all himself to those to whom he hath given this part of himself.

Secondly, This may be known by the testimony of the Spirit with the heart (2 Cor. 5. 5.) *He that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God*; God sets up a frame of holiness in every believer, He hath wrought us; and how are we assured that he hath? *Who also hath given us the earnest of his Spirit*. The graces of the Spirit are a real earnest of the Spirit, yet they are not alwayes an evidential earnest; therefore an earnest is often superadded to our graces. There is a three-fold work of the Spirit.

First, To conveigh and plant grace in the Soul.

Secondly, To act and help us to exercise the graces, which are planted there.

Thirdly, To shine upon and enlighten those graces, or to give an earnest of those graces; This last work the Spirit fulfils two wayes.

First, By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work.

Secondly, By presence and influence, which is an immediate work. This the Apostle calls *witness-bearing* (1 John 5. 8.) *There are three that bear witness in Earth, The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood*. The Spirit brings in the witness of the Water and of the Blood, which is his mediate work; but besides and above these he gives a distinct witness of his own, which is his immediate work, and is in a way of peculiarity and transcendency, called the witness of the Spirit. Hence that of the Apostle Paul, *We have not received the spirit of the world, but we have received the Spirit which is of Christ, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. The things freely given may be received by us, and yet the receipt of them not known to us, therefore we receive the Spirit, that we may know what is given us, and what we have received. The Spirit doth (as it were) put his hand to our receipts, and his seal also, whence he is said, *To seal us up to the day of redemption*, Ephes. 4. 30.

Sixthly, Observe,

A godly man dares appeal to God himself, that he is not wicked.

He dares stand before God to justify his sincerity, though he dares

dares not stand to justifie himself before God. *Job* had often laid all thoughts of his own righteousness in the dust, but he alwayes stands up for his own uprightnes. *God is my witness* (saith the Apostle *Paul*, Rom. 9. 1.) *whom I serve in my spirit in the Gospel of his Son*; I serve God in my spirit, and God knows that I do so, I dare appeal unto him that it is so, *God is my witness*. When Christ put that question, and drove it home upon *Peter* thrice, *Simon, Lovest thou me?* Lord (saith he) *Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love thee* (Joh. 21.) As if he had said, I will not give testimony of my self, thou shalt not have it upon my word, but upon thine own knowledge. It were easie for me to say, *Master, I love thee with all my heart, with all my soul*, but I refer my self to thy own bosome, *Thou knowest I love thee*. So when *Hezekiah* lay (as he thought) upon his death-bed, he turned himself to the wall, desiring God to look upon the integrity of his life, *Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth* (Isa. 38. 3.) I do not go to the world for their good word of me, I rest not in what my Subjects or neighbour Princes say of me, Lord, it is enough for me, that what I have been, and what I am, is laid up safe in the treasury of thy thoughts. This brings strong consolation, when we take not up the testimony of men, nor rest in the good opinion of our brethren, but can have God himself to make *affidavit*, or bear witness with us, and for us. That such a man will say, I am an honest man, that such a man will give his word for me, is cold comfort; but when the soul can say, God will give his word for me, *The Lord knows that I am not wicked*; here's enough to warm our hearts when the love of the world is waxen so cold, and their tongues so frozen with uncharitableness, that they will not speak a good word of us, how much good soever they know by us.

Seventhly, Consider the condition wherein *Job* was, when he spake this, he was upon the rack, and, as it were, under an inquisition, God laid his hand extream hard upon him, yet at that time, even then, he saith, *Lord, thou knowest that I am not wicked*. Hence observe,

A man of an upright heart and good conscience, will not be brought to think that God hath ill thoughts of him, how much evil so ever God brings upon him.

The actings of God toward us are often full of changes and turnings, but the thoughts of God never change. A soul may be

afflicted till he is weary of himself, yet he knows God is not weary of him. Whomsoever he hath once made good, he cannot but for ever esteem good; and, all such a mans afflictions, are either to shew how good God hath made him, or to make him better.

Eightly, *Job* was under as bad thoughts of man, as (almost) any man ever was, when he spake thus to God, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* Hence observe,

That all the hard censures and misconstructions of men, cannot beat an upright heart out of this hold, that God loveth him, and hath a good opinion of him.

Let men think what they will of him, and judge him as severely as they please; this moves him not at all to think, that God judges him so too. He can see the love of God thorow all the anger of creatures. He likes not his condition the better, because some men tell him it is good, nor the worse, because any man tells him it is ill, while he finds himself bottomed upon the free grace of God, and cheared with the clearness of his own integrity. *The gates of hell shall not* (much less shall the uncharitableness of men) *prevail against such a man.* Happy is he, who can say unto God, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked,* while men are saying, thou art wicked. And how miserable is he, whose heart tells him he is wicked, though men say, surely, thou art good. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things,* (1 *Job.* 3. 20) Doth conscience tell you that you are wicked, God can tell you so much more? It is a woful thing for any man to be under the just condemnation of his own heart, though it is more woful to be under the flatteries of his own heart. *It is bad enough to be daubed by others with untempered mortar, it is far worse to be a self-dauber;* No man hath cause to rejoyce in what himself, or be troubled at what others say of him, unless God say so too.

Two things are further observable from these words;

First, *There is no medium between a Godly and a wicked man.* Every man is one of these two. Some are called civil honest men; many conceit that these are good men indeed, and not a few, that these are in a middle state between good and evil: But the truth is, there is nothing between good and evil, light and darkness: there is no medium of participation between these extreame. *Solomon* (*Eccles.* 9. 2.) set all men in two orders, *All things come alike unto all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good,*

good, to the clean, and to the unclean, to him that sweareth, and to him that feareth an oath. Note by the way, he doth not put the distinction between him that sweareth, and him that sweareth not, but between him that sweareth, and him that feareth an oath. There are many who are not swearers (swearing is deboyfery, and so inconsistent with civility) who yet do not fear an oath. It is better to fear to do evil, then not to do evil. This division runs thorough the whole world. Good and evil (in a remiss degree) mingle in the same person, but no mans person is in a middle state between good and evil.

Secondly, *God hath a negative knowledge concerning the state of every man.* This is a transcendent, beyond any knowledge which man hath of man. God doth not only know what is in us, but what is not in us, not only what we are, but what we are not. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* The reason why a negative oath is not admitted among men, is, because no man can swear so in knowledge. None can speak negatively of another, knowingly, but God alone. We may say of a man, there is that in him for which it is meet for us to judge him godly: But it is impossible from any outward evidence to conclude peremptorily, he is not wicked. It is more to say of a man, he is not wicked, then to say, he is godly. *It is easier to know what is, then what is not.* As it is in voting, so in knowing: Negative votes are strongest. To say such a thing shall not pass or be done, imports the greatest power: so negative knowledge is the highest, to say such a thing is not, or such a man did it not, imports a certain knowledge, a knowledge so certain, as is applicable to none, but God himself, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

And there is no that can deliver out of thine hand.

What none? Then were our condition sad indeed? None, excludes meer creatures only. Christ can deliver us out of the hand of God. And Job believed Christ had delivered him, when he said, *There is none that can deliver.*

The hand of God is the power of God; and to deliver out of his hand, is to fetch out, or free from his power. The word which we translate to deliver, notes delivering either by power or by policy, by strength, or by wit. A prisoner is delivered sometimes by rescue or open violence, sometimes by stealth or secret conveyance, he picks a lock, or breaks a door to deliver himself out of the hand of man, But neither of these wayes can any man deliver

782 In piel.

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Spoliavit, diripuit, vel significat furis se eripuit.

himself, or get deliverance out of the hand of God. There is no difficulty in the interpretation of these words, but there is some difference about the intent of them.

*No mea quidem
integritas, cu-
jus tu mihi te-
stis es, facit ut
hac plaga li-
berer: ut qui
nihil scio meo
coram te pro-
mereri possim,
Jun.*

First, Some, for *none*, translate *nothing*, and so joyn these words with the former, as an argument of the insufficiency of mans righteousness, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked, yet there is nothing (in my righteousness) that can deliver me out of thine hand.* As Paul said (1 Cor. 4. 4.) *I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified.* So Job saith, Lord, Thou knowest nothing by me, yet hereby I cannot be delivered.

Secondly, These words may be expounded, as tending to move compassion, and to stir up bowels of pity in God towards Job; As if he had said, Lord, why dost thou deal thus severely with me, when there is none that can deliver me out of thine hand; who can rescue me, while thou laiest thine arrest upon me? Thou mayest keep me under restraint, as long as thou wilt; I cannot be fetcht off, or out, and wilt thou deal thus hardly with me? Wilt thou punish me thus? Whom we cannot hold long in our hands, we are apt to deal more roughly with, while they are in our hands, and to take our penny-worths out of them, while we have them. And 'tis usual with great Princes speedily to seal the Writ of execution against an eminent offender, when they hear or suspect any potent suiters will move for his pardon, and sollicite his deliverance out of the hand of justice. Job seems to speak in allusion to such, *If there were any who could deliver me out of thine hand, or pull me away from thee by strength, or by entreaty, I should wonder the less at thy severity.*

*Non est qui cla-
mat Deus opti-
mum stringas
gladium, ne
strictum exter-
das in populum
tuum.*

God doth sometimes even bespeak the intercession of others, and complains that none come in to deliver a people or a person out of his hand. When he was about to destroy Sodom, he tells it unto Abraham, probably, for that very end, that Abraham might intercede for Sodom, and (at least) get Lot out of his hand. When God was about to execute his judgments upon Jerusalem, He saw, and there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessour, none to take him off from destroying that people (Isa. 59. 16.) The Prophet complains in words of the same importance (chap. 64. 7.) *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.* Friends, seeing a father go out hastily to correct his child, rise presently, or stir up themselves to take hold of the father, or to mediate for the child, Pray spare him for this time, and

and hold your hand : but saith the Prophet, *There is none that will stir up himself to take hold of God.* He is going out in wrath, and no man puts him in mind of mercy, with that cry of another Prophet, *O spare thy people, and give not thine heritage to reproach!* When *Abraham* was ready to slay *Isaac* upon the altar, when his hand was stretched out to fetch the fatal blow, just then, did the Angel take hold of his sword, and delivered *Isaac* out of his hand. God saith to *Moses* (Exod. 32. 10.) *Let me alone;* God was about to destroy that people, *Moses* would not permit him, he seeks to deliver *Israel* out of the revenging hand of God, by that holy violence of prayer and supplication.

Lastly, Others look upon *Job*, as breathing out a very heroick and magnanimous spirit in the s. words. As if he had said, *Lord, Thou knowest, and thou shalt know, that I am not wicked, though none deliver or take me out of thine hand, Thou shalt find me holding mine integrity, as long as I hold my life, I am resolved to honour thee, whatsoever thou dost with me.* And so he refutes the charge of Satan : Satan said, *Touch his flesh and his bone, and he will curse thee to thy face:* No, saith *Job*, though he taketh away my flesh and my bones, yet I will not curse him to his face, no nor speak an ill word of him behind his back. Though I should never be delivered, yet God shall never be blasphemed. Upon the whole observe,

That there is no means on earth can rescue us out of the hand of God.

I kill, and I make alive, I wound, and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand, Deut. 32. 39. Till God discharge us there's no escaping : none can force us out of his hand, whatsoever is in theirs ; power cannot, policy cannot, riches cannot : we cannot bribe our selves out of the sight, or beyond the stroke of divine justice. A golden key will not open Gods prison door. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath;* and in some dayes of wrath, prayer it self cannot prevail. Then take heed how ye fall into the hands of God. No wise man will run into his displeasure, from whom there is no deliverance, but at his own pleasure. See more of this point, Chap. 9. 12.

JOB Chap. 10. Vers. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Ne
into
jus
st
hac
bere
nibi
cora
more
Jun

Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about; and yet thou dost destroy me.

Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me like cheese?

Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.

Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

And these things hast thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee.

AT the third verse of this Chapter, we find Job questioning with the Lord, *Is it good for thee that thou shouldest oppress? That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?* In these words he insisteth upon, and illustrateth that argument, by fitting it to his own condition; As if he had said, Lord, seeing thou wilt not despise the work of mine hands, why shouldest thou despise me? Am not I the work of thy hands? *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about, and yet thou dost destroy me.* The whole context argues out this point: wherein we may observe,

1. His forming or making, set down in general at the eighth verse, *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about.*

2. The matter out of which he was formed and made, at the ninth verse, *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay.*

3. His forming is drawn out in particulars. Wherein we have,

First, his conception at the tenth verse, *Hast not thou poured me out as milk, and crudled me as cheese?*

2. The conjunction or setting together of his parts, at the 11. verse, *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.*

3. The

Non
mat
men
glad
strie
dis
tuun

3. The quickning of his parts thus joyned and set together at the 12. verse, *Thou hast granted me life.*

4. The preservation of his life, in the same verse, *Thou hast given me life, and (not only so, but) favour, and thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.*

5. Lastly, We have *Jobs* strength of assurance, or his assertion concerning all this at the 13. verse, *These things thou hast hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee;* as if he had said, *Lord, Thou knowest all is truth which I have spoken.*

There are three opinions concerning the connection or tie of these words with those that went before.

First, Some conceive that *Job* persisteth in the same matter handled, in the words immediately foregoing, exalting the knowledge of God concerning man upon this ground, because God made man. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* How did *Job* know that? He must needs know what man is, who made man. *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about;* so much as I am thy work, a piece of thy framing, surely, thou knowest what thou hast framed: thou who hadst knowledg enough to make me, hast a perfect knowledge of what thou hast made me. We may joyn it also with the later clause, *None can deliver out of thine hand;* Why? *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me.* Is it possible for the work to deliver it self out of the hand of him who wrought it? Is that which is formed too strong for him that formed it, when as the same hand which gave it form, gave it strength? We find this argument as to the former part (*Psal. 94. 9.*) where from the work of God in our natural constitution, the holy pen-man proves the fullness of his knowledge concerning us in every condition; *Understand ye brutish* (he speaks to men, who acted more like beasts then men) *He that planted the ear, Shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, Shall he not see?* As if he had said, He that made the ear, is all hearing; and he who formed the eye, is all eye, all sight. The argument holds strong from Gods power in forming man, to his power of knowing man, and to his power of disposing man. That's the first way of dependance.

Secondly, *Job* may be conceived, as rendring an account of those things about which he had taken the boldness to interrogate the Lord, at the third verse. Here he answers his own question; as if he had said, now I see well enough why thou mayst de-

spise

*Iam teneo hujus
rei causam; cum
enim manus il-
lius me fecerint,
jure suo potest
Deus me destru-
ere, Cajet.*

spise and destroy thy work, *It is thy work*; I will go no further' for a reason to vindicate thee in breaking me to pieces then this, *That thine hands have set me together: Thou hast made me*, and thou mayst unmake me; thou hast rais'd me up, and thou mayst pull me down. So the copulative (*van*) in the original, which we translate by the adversative, yet, is taken for a conjunction causal; and so it is frequently used in Scripture (*Gen. 30. 20.*) *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return*; The sense is, *Dust thou art, therefore to dust thou shalt return* (*Exod. 15. 23, 24.*) *The waters were bitter, and the people murmured*; that is, *The waters were bitter, therefore the people murmured*; here thus, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, therefore thou dost destroy me*. He that builds the house at his own charge, and by his own power, may ruine it at his own pleasure.

Ex sua formatione artificum misericordiam movet et commemorato pristino beneficio, alia denud efflagitandam jam arripit. Pined.

Thirdly, The words may carry the sense of a strong motive to prevail with God, to handle *Job* more gently, or to deal more tenderly with him; why? The Lord had bestowed much care and cost to make and fashion him: therefore he will surely pity, and spare him. There is a natural motion of the heart in every agent, towards the preservation of that which proceedeth from it. Creation is followed with providence. If a speechless and lifeless creature could speak and understand, it would argue with it's maker (in *Job's* case) as *Job* doth, *Dost thou yet destroy me?* *David* strengthens his heart to ask good at the hands of God, because he had spoken good concerning him (*2 Sam. 7. 27.*) *Thou, O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house; therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee*. Now, if *David* were not only emboldned to ask, but even assured to receive mercy, because God promised to build him a house; that is, to prosper his estate and family, how much more might *Job* be encouraged to pray for, and expect mercy from the hand of God, because God had already framed and built that natural house, his body? The Prophet *Isaiah* being about to plead with God for new mercies, presents him with a catalogue of his old mercies (*Chap. 63. 7, 8 9.*) *I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath done unto us, and the great goodness towards the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, &c. according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses, &c.* Having thus at large told the Lord what he had done,

the

the Prophet (in a holy zeal) contends with him about what he was doing, vers. 15. *Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness, and of thy glory; where is thy zeal, and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards me, Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, &c.* As if he had said, That great sea of thy goodness hath sent out abundant streams of good things heretofore, and are all these streams now dried up, and the springs exhausted? What's become of thy zeal and strength and compassions? Are they all spent and gone? Thus Job seems to plead here, *thine hands have made me, thou hast done thus and thus for me, and wilt thou now destroy me?* According to this interpretation the latter clause of the verse is rendered by an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me, and dost thou yet destroy me?* What, thou my maker destroy me! Remember, I beseech thee (so in the next verse) *that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into the dust again?* Thus by a specification of the great outward benefits which he had received from the hand of God, he seems to aggravate his present sorrows, and to sollicite future mercies.

*Et sic repen-
d præcipitas me.
Vulg.
Antithesi bene-
ficiorum am-
plissimorum, in
se à domino col-
laturum, exag-
gerat iram quo
nunc in se de-
servit ac affli-
ones, quibus
exagitur. Jun*

Thine hands.

Hands are often ascribed to God, as was shewed, vers. 3. Many things are made with the hand; The maker of all things is without hands, and yet he is all hand. Hence all things that were made, are said to be made by the hands of God; not only the forming of man, but the forming of the Heavens and of the Earth, is the work of his hand (*Psal. 102. 25. Psal. 95. 5.* (both are put together.) *Isa. 48. 13.*) *My hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the Heavens.* Wheresoever the great works of God are exprest, a hand usually is exprest as the instrument working them, yet his hand wrought the least as well as the greatest, a worm of the earth, as well as man upon the earth, or the Angels in Heaven.

The heads of men have run into great variety of opinion, about these hands forming man.

First, Many of the Ancients understand by the hands of God, *The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, and the holy spirit of God, who is the Third, Thine hands have made me, that is, the Son and the holy Spirit, who were assistant to, and of counsel*

*Ambros. in
Hexam. Hom.
11. Basil, &c.*

with the Father at the Creation of man, *And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness,* Gen. 1. 26.

Others expound hands literally and formally, not as if God had hands (that's below their conceit) but thus, It hath been said of old, that when God at first had formed man, the Son took upon him an outward shape, or the shape of a man; and so (say they) Christ (not made man, but) in the form of man formed man.

*Causis secundis
veluti quibusdā
manibus utitur
Deus ad produ-
cendas res sub-
limiores. Aquin.*

Thirdly, the hands of God are all second causes, which God useth toward the production of any effect. All hands work for God, they work for him, while they are set a work against him; and so may be called, *The hands of God*. Mans making since the Creation, is not an immediate work; the Creation of the first man was. Yet it is so much the work of God still, that every man is the work of his hands, as well as the first man. All inferiour causes concurring to the making of man are the hands, by which God maketh man.

Fourthly, The hands of God, are generally taken for the power and wisdom of God. The hand of power acts, what the hand of wisdom doth contrive. As the hand is often put for power, so to put any thing in the hand of another, is to put it into his power. That grant which was made to Satan at the beginning of this book, runs in this strain, *Behold, he* (meaning Job) *is in thine hand* (that is, Thou mayest do with him what thou wilt) *only save his life* (Chap. 2. 6.)

The Schoolmen determine the hands of God to be the *understanding and will of God*, which they call, *The executive power of God*; by these he determines what shall be done, and doth what he predetermines. The very decree and purpose of God, is called the hand of God (*Acts 4. 28.*) *Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel determined before to be done.* Gods hand was the sovereign power of God, over-ruling those evil instruments to fulfil his holy counsels, while they intended only to fulfil their own wicked counsels.

*Tu pro tua pote-
state inq: jure
Beza*

We may best interpret Job in the fourth sense, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me*, that is, I am made and fashioned by thy power and wisdom, I am a piece of thy forming. None but the only wise, and all-powerful God, could produce such an effect as I am.

Have

Have made me and fashioned me.

Here are two words which some distinguish by referring the one to the body, the other to the soul. We need not be so accurate about these words. But thus much is plainly noted in them, that the Lord was exceeding accurate about this work, the *fashioning of man*. Both words have their special elegancies.

The first, which we translate *made*, signifies more then to *make*, it signifies to make exactly and curiously. It is a word proper to Artificers, who work, or should work with an equal mixture of diligence and knowledg, of pains and skill: Artificers mingle their heads, and their hands in every thing they undertake, and bestow more study then toil upon their works.

This word is translated only to grieve, vex, or to put one to trouble. The perverse carriage of the people of Israel toward the Spirit of God, is expressed by it (Isa. 63. 10.) *They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit*. And that *bread of sorrows*, that is, bread gotten by sorrowful or hard labour is delivered in this term (Psa. 127. 2.) See a further explication of the word, Chap. 9. vers. 27.

pag 352.

God is not put to any pain at all in making man, he doth all his works with infinite delight and ease. *Nothing is hard to him who can do all things: Omnipotency never meets with any difficulty*. But God is exprest in making man by a word, signifying solicitude and painful care, implying, That man is made as those things are, upon which man bestows greatest pains and care. Man doth not look like a piece of work slubbered over slightly, or clapt up in haste. The most wise God, who sheweth his manifold wisdom in the work of redemption, shewed much of his wisdom in the work of Creation; He made man (as we speak) in Print.

A learned Translator renders, *Thy hands put me to pain, which have made me*; as if Job had complained here of the pain which God put him to after he had made him, rather then exalted God for the pains he seemed to have taken, when he made him. But we may better keep to our rendring, *Thine hands have made me*, and

Fashioned me.

The *making* of man importeth his being: The *fashioning* of him, the outward formality of his being. Man receives not only his

R r r 2

nature,

צו

In sua prima
significatione
denotat, dolore
afficere.

Panis anxietate
magna
labore partus

Deus non se fatigavit in homine condendo; Sed de Deo Scriptura hominum more loquitur, quasi summas cura et anxietate ad eum formandum usus esset Deus, ut nihil ad ejus perfectionem deesset. Marc. Manus tue dolore afficiunt me, quae fecerunt me. Jun.

nature, but his figure from God. The word signifies to trim or polish, to do a thing curiously and compleatly Gen. 1. 31. *God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good. He saw all with delight and highest content: for he had put all in to a composition of most exquisite comeliness, and perfect beauty. A due and proper fashion is the essence of comeliness, Thine hands have not only made, but fashioned me, and that not in part only, but as it followeth,*

עשה
Est aliquid fa-
cere, sed ornare
& polire, rem
omnibus modis
perfectam effi-
cere.

יחד כרוב

Alludera vide-
tur ad figuli ro-
tam. Rined.

Artifices opus
pene absolutum
curiose circum-
spiciunt, ut si
quid oculis in-
gratum depre-
bendant, corri-
gant. Sanct.

a Dicit in circu-
itu, quod corpus
videtur anima
esse in circuitu,
sicut vestimen-
tum vestito, aut
sicut domus ha-
bitatori. Aquin
b Tertius dicit
ad singula
verborum mem-
bra referatur.

Idem est, quod
latinus dicit
intus & extra,
intus & in cu-
te, a capite ad
pedes.

Quanti, quan-
tus sum, magna
Dei cura &
artificio elabo-
ratus sum. Pi-
ned.

on oley arpa-
moyin tpa-
nos.

Together round about.

This is no pleonasm or superfluity of speech; for though when a thing is made and fashioned, it is supposed to be made round about, yet here to shew the exactness of God in making man, Job speaks as if God had resolved to have all of his own doing, and would not trust the least part of this work into the hand of any other, *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about.* Which words are, say some,

First, An allusion to the art of a potter, who formeth and fashioneth earthen vessels, turning them often about and about upon his Wheel. Or it may be an allusion to a Statuary, or to a painter, who having a curious costly piece in hand, goes about it, and views it round on every side: That if any thing suite not his eye, his fancy, or the rule of art, he may correct it.

Secondly, a Others conceive that this *round about*, is only a circumlocution of the body, because the body encompasseth the soul round about, as a garment doth the body, or a house the inhabitant.

Thirdly, b *Together round about*, is (as was touched before) me in every part, or all me. When some took offence at Christs healing a sick man upon the Sabbath day, he answers, *Are ye angry at me because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?* (John 7. 23.) or that I have made the whole man whole, not leaving any unsound limb about him? There is a like phrase (Luk. 11. 40.) which may illustrate this; *Ye fools, Did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?* That is, Did not he that made man, make him together round about; Did not he make whatsoever is man? So *Jobs together round about*, is, as if he had said, *Thou hast made me within and without from head to foot; thou hast made me all that I am; how great, how good, how strong, how beautifull soever I am, I am made by thee. Thou* (as David speaks,

ſpeaks, (*Pſal. 139. 5.*) *haſt beſet or formed me* (ſo the Hebrew, *צרתני* *Formaſti me.* *bind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.*

Fourthly, By *together round about*, we may underſtand all without man, which man hath about him. Thou haſt made and faſhioned, not only my body, but my eſtate, my honour, my friends, my children (*children round about the Table, Pſal. 128. 2.*) Thou haſt given me all that I have about me; Whatſoever I am, I am made and faſhioned by thine hands: So the phraſe is uſed, *Chap. 19. 9, 10. He hath ſtrippt me of my glory, and taken the Crown from my head, he hath deſtroyed me on every ſide;* or, he hath deſtroyed me round about, that is, All that he hath made round about me, he hath taken away from me; he hath ſtrippt me of all he once clothed me with. Mr. Broughon tranſlates much to that ſenſe, *Thou haſt faſhioned and made me in every point;* that is, Look whatſoever I am conſiderable in, under what notion ſo ever I may be taken, *Thou haſt made me and faſhioned me in all.* *Per circuitum omnia etiam illa intelligimus quæ hominem cingunt, ſc. facultates, liberos, familiam univerſam.*

Obſerve, Firſt,

Then making of man now, is the work of God, as well as the making of the firſt man was.

Job doth not ſay, The Lord did once make and faſhion man, but *thine hands have made me*: He aſcribeth his own making to God, as well as *Adams*. The ſtructure and frame of nature is the work of God, not of Nature: Nature and natural cauſes are nothing but the order in which God worketh. God turneth or changeth, ſtops, or ſets them forward as he pleaſeth. Second cauſes work purely at the will of God; though means be uſed by man, yet the effect is Gods. Corn groweth in the field by the hand of God. You will ſay, What then doth the husbandman? What doth the earth? What do the Sun and Rain? Do not all theſe work? All theſe are nothing but the order wherein, and by which the hand of God makes the Corn to grow; for let all thoſe ſecond cauſes work as hard as they can, yet the Corn grows not, unleſs God ſpeak the word; His ſteps, not the husbandmans, drop fatneſs, It is he, not the Sun or the Rain, which makes the vallies ſtand thicke with Corn, to laugh and ſing. As in ſpirituals, ſo in naturals, he that planteth, and he that watereth is nothing, but God that giveth the increaſe. The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks excluſively of man, as to the point of mans making, and he putteth an emphasis upon it, as if man did not take notice enough, if at all, *Natura nihil aliud eſt quam divinum operum ordo Bern.*

Psal. 107. 3.

all, of this, that in this man is nothing, *Know ye, that the Lord be is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves.* There may be a great deal of grace acted in acknowledging God to be the author of Nature: yet I conceive the Psalmist speaks there rather of Gods making us in grace than in nature.

Secondly, Observe, *Job* recounting what God had done for him, brings in, *I by hands have made me and fashioned me,* then,

Our making and natural constitution are to be reckoned amongst the great benefits received from God.

Psal. 139. 14. I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. The making of a man is a wonder: though the frequency of it makes the wonder little observed, yet the wonder is not (in it self) the less. *David*, who had serious and holy thoughts about natural things, confesseth, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* A Heathen had three reasons for which he used especially to thank God. One of them was this, because he had made him a man. If men, who have but the light of nature can see so much of God in nature, How much of God should we see in nature, who have the light of grace to see it by!

Thirdly, From the words put together, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about,* Observe,

The whole fashion and fabrick of man is from God.

From which general take these consecrations.

See more of
this point be-
fore at the
third verse of
this Chapter.
pag. 443.

First, Then do not undervalue the body, it is the work of God, *He hath fashioned it round about.* We always look upon and value our bodies too much, when we are proud of them; but we can never look upon or value our bodies too much, while we are thankful for them; and that we may be so, we ought to view every room of this house of clay, from story to story, from the garret to the cellar, from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, that we seeing the wonderful works of God, may have our hearts enlarged in his praises. Some have put ignoble titles upon the body of man, calling it a prison, or a shackle. The body is not a prison, it is a palace; it is not a shackle, it is an organ, a fit instrument for the soul to use and act by. If at any time the body be unuseful to the soul, that proceeds from sinful corruption, not from its natural constitution.

το σῶμα τῆς
καταινίας
ἡμῶν.

But the Apostle (*Phil. 3. 21.*) calleth our body, *a vile body,* or the body of our vileness. Mans body is not vile, as God made it (so it is a stately structure) but as sin hath made it. The

Apostle

Apostle calls it vile, not absolutely, and in it self, but relatively. The body clothed with mortality is vile, compared with the body, when it shall be clothed with glory, and that glory like the glory of the body of Christ, as is assured us, *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*; The words carry an allusion to those who changing old and broken vessels, desire to have them wrought in the best, and newest fashion. The body of Christ is the richest piece of Gods work, and this shall be the pattern of ours; as here upon earth the spirits of believers are of the same fashion with Christs (the same mind is in the Saints, which was in Christ, there is but one draft of grace (in the main) upon the Souls of all holy men, and that is a copy of Christs, his being the original) So in heaven, the bodies of all believers shall be of the same fashion with Christs. There shall be but one draft of glory in the main (for degrees do not vary the kind) upon the body of Christ, and the bodies of all his members. In reference to this future change of the body, the body in its present state, is vile.

Secondly, Hence it follows, That as we must not undervalue the frame of mans body in general, as imperfect; so we may not despise any for their special bodily imperfections. It is God who hath made and fashioned them round about. It is said (2 Sam. 5. 8.) that the blind and the lame were hated of *Dauids* soul. Yet to hate any for defects in the body, is a very great defect in the Soul: and to contemn any for natural blemishes, is a spiritual blemish. How then could *David* hate the blind and the lame, and not sin, or are we to number this among his sins? There are two expositions of those words, upon either of which we may clear the difficulty.

First, That when *David* sent to summon that Fort, the *Jebusites* who were the defendants, trusting in the strength of the place, told *David* in scorn that he must first conquer the blind and the lame. As implying the blind and lame Soldiers, were garrison good enough to deal with his great Army upon the advantage of such a fortress.

Secondly, The blind and the lame, may rather be the Idols and strange Gods which the *Jebusites* worshiped, of whose protection, they were not the less confident, because the Jews counted them but blind and lame. As if they had said, even these gods, which you call blind and lame, see well enough what ye
are

are doing, and will come fast enough, and too fast for your ease, to our aid and succour. These blind and lame gods were justly hated of *Dauids* soul, but he had learned better then to hate men, who were made lame or blind by God.

Thirdly, Seeing all men are fashioned round about by the hands of God, then as we must not despise any for their bodily imperfections, so not envy any for their bodily perfections. Some are as much troubled to see another have a better body, or a more beautiful face, as many are (alike sinfully both) to see another have a better purse, or a more plentiful estate then themselves.

Fourthly, *Let not the thing formed, say to him that formed it, Why hast thou formed me thus?* If thy earthly Tabernacle be not so highly, so strongly built, if the materials of it be not so pure, or not so exactly tempered, if thou hast not so good a constitution, so elegant a composition, if thou art not so adorn'd and polish'd, as some others are; yet be not discontented, the hands of God have made and fashioned thee round about. It is a great honour to a vessel, that he made it, though he have made it (in this sense) a vessel of dishonour.

Fifthly, If God hath fashioned our bodies, then we must not put them out of fashion. It is dangerous to deface the work of God, to undo that which God hath done, to unmake that which God hath made. How sad is it that any should pull down a building of Gods own setting up, without warrant from God! Self-murder, or the murder of another, is an high affront to God, and should have a severe revenge from man. He that sheds his own blood takes revenge upon himself, *And who so sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made he man, (G.n. 9. 6.)* As what God hath joyned by a civil, so by a natural band, Let no man put asunder.

Lastly, If thou art made and fashioned by God, then let God have the use of all thou art. Let God dwell in the house, which he hath set up. Let thy body be employed for God; he that made it, hath most right to it. Every thing in man shews forth the wisdom and goodness of God towards man, let every thing in man shew forth obedience and submission unto God. This was the ground of *Dauids* prayer (*Psal. 119. 73.*) *Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me, give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments;* as if he had said, Lord, I would use this body, this soul,

soul, this all, which thou hast made, for thy glory, therefore give me understanding that I may learn thy will; I would not do the will of another, while I dwell in thy house, and am thy tenant at will. I would not imploy those members which thou hast given me, to fullſil the Law of sin, or the commands of Satan. The Apostle is clear upon this argument in reference to redemption (1 Cor. 6. 19.) *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorifie God with your bodies, and in your spirits, which are Gods;* Now as in the work of Redemption we are of God by grace, so in the work of Creation we are of God by nature. The reason holds in both, glorifie God with your bodies, which are not your own, but Gods. It is usual in letting out of houses to put a clause in the lease, that the house shall not be imployed to such and such uses, but only to such as are expresseſſed in the indenture. Surely the Lord who hath built and furnished these houses, hath taught us how to imploy them, and what trade to exercise in them, even the trade of holiness. Take heed you do not let out any room or corner of a room in this house for sin to trade in, or for the work of iniquity. This is to let out a house of Gods making to the devils using.

Yet thou dost destroy me.

The word signifies to *swallow up*; and to swallow up with greediness, *Pſal. 52. 4. Thou lovest all devouring* (or swallowing) *words*; words which swallow down thy neighbours credit, and devour his good name, as one morsel. The holy Ghost expresseth our final victory over death, by a word which reacheth this sense (1 Cor. 15. 54.) *Death is swallowed up* (or drunk down) *in victory*; death is drunk up at a draught. Christ called his sufferings (by which he got this victory) a cup. The Apostle uses the same word again (2 Cor. 5. 4.) *That mortality might be swallowed up of life.* When this mortality shall have put on immortality, death shall be swallowed up in victory, that is, there shall be a compleat victory over death, and not only so, but mortality shall be swallowed up of life. In heaven there shall be no death, nor any thing like death, nothing bearing any the least resemblance of its image, or letter of its superscription, nothing of mortality shall be found or felt there: There mortality shall be swallowed up of life; here Job complains that his life was almost swallowed up of mortality. *Yet thou dost destroy, or swallow me up.* As thou hast already swal-
S ff lowed

בלע
Absorbere est
morsificatio de-
struere. Coc.
Deglutio signi-
ficat omnino-
dam extermi-
nationem, vo-
rumque omni-
um profundissi-
mum exitium. |
κατεπιβη οθα.
vat & ες vi-
nos.

lowed up my estate; so thou seemest resolved to swallow up my very breath. When Joab besieged Abel, a wise woman out of the City cryed unto him, *Thou seekest to destroy a City in Israel, why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?* 2 Sam. 20. 19. Job saw a great Army of afflictions encamping about him: and he seems to cry out to the Lord of those hosts; why seekest thou to destroy thy servant, why wilt thou swallow me, who am the work of thine hands?

Distinctio Hebraeorum magni postulat, ut verba praecedentia, simul circumquaque cum his jungantur, & absorbantur me.
Merc.

Licet sensus non multum diversus sit, interrogatio tamen sensum reddit valde acrem, & incitatum.
Merc.

Quem diligentissime fecisti diligentissime destruis.

See more of this point, ver 3. P. 445.

Grammarians observe from the exactest reading of the Hebrew, that the former words [*Together round about*] should be joyn'd with these [*Thou dost destroy me*] *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, and yet thou dost destroy me together round about*; that is, Thou makest an utter end, a total consumption of me.

Again, these words are read by some with an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, and dost thou yet destroy me?* The question doth not alter, but quicken the sense, and render it more pressing and pathetical. Wilt thou destroy me thus exactly, whom thou hast made so exactly? The (yet) in the Text sounds out an admiration. As when God (*Amos 4.*) had brought many judgments upon *Jerusalem*, and found them still impenitent, he concludes the narrative of every one, with, *Yet have they not returned unto me*; As if he had said, What a wonder is here? So Job repeating the favours of God to him, concludes with a *yet thou dost, or dost thou yet destroy me?* As if he had said, What a wonder is here? *How unsearchable are thy judgments, O God, and thy ways past finding out?* Thus he sets what God then did, in opposition to what he had done, that so the consideration of former mercies might provoke him to remove or mitigate present judgments. Dost thou destroy me who hast made me?

Hence observe,

First, *That to mind God of making us, is an argument to stay his hand from breaking us.*

It repented the Lord (*saieth Moses, Gen. 6. 6.*) that he had made man, and it grieved him at the heart. This repentance and grief did not arise from his making of man; but from that necessity which his own justice and honour laid upon him to destroy man whom he had made, as it follows in the next words, *And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created.* The words shew the resolution of God, not his propension; it went to his heart:

heart to do it. If God repented and grieved (understand both by a figure) because he had made man, whom he must destroy, then it cannot but be a grief to him to destroy that which he hath made. It is as easie to the power of God to undo, as it is to do : but it is not so easie to his will to undo, as it is to do.

Secondly, Observe, *Afflictions destructive to the outward man, may be the lot of the best men.*

God never destroys that spiritual creature, which the hand of his grace hath made and fashioned : but he doth sometimes destroy the natural creature of those who are spiritual.

Thirdly, Observe, *A good man will make honourable mention of the goodness of God to him, while he is under greatest evils.*

Job writes the natural history of Gods power and wisdom in his constitution, while destruction was knocking at his doors. Though God will destroy what he hath made, yet he ought to be glorified for what he hath made. The praise of God for fashioning us, is never so comely, as when he is putting us out of fashion.

Fourthly, Observe, *God doth that sometimes which is most improbable he should do.*

He acts strangely in wayes of mercy, and strangely in ways of judgment. He saves those whom we expect he should destroy, and he destroys those whom we expect he should save. *The Kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entred into the gates of Jerusalem (Lam. 4. 12.)* and who would have believed that the adversary and the enemy, sorrow and destruction, should have entred into the gates of *Job*? God comes with such afflictions upon his people now, as make him to be admired by all the world. Christ will come with such mercies at the last, as will make him to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe (2 Thes. 1. 10.) Christ will exceed, not only our unbelief, but our faith.

In the former verse *Job* pleaded with God, as his maker, he proceeds still in the same argument, and re-inforceth it from a special intimation of the matter out of which he was made, *clay*.

VERSE 9. Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay,
and wilt thou bring me into dust again?

Remember, I beseech thee.

רָחַם
Recordatus est,
memor fuit, o-
doratus fuit,
quando de sa-
crificiis usur-
patur.

Odoretur omnia
munera tua.

Jun.

Zachar, mas out
à memoria que
magis pollet
quam mulier,
aut quia memo-
riam & nomen
familie confer-
vat. Buxtorf.

Job speaks heartily, his spirit was in a heat, Remember I be-
seech thee. The original word is applied to a sensitive act, as well
as to a rational (Psal. 20. 3.) The Lord remember, or smell all thy
offerings. Memory is the savour or scent of things preserved in
the mind. The Hebrews express man, or a male child, by a
word of that root, and they give two reasons of it. Either, first,
because man is of a stronger memory then the woman. Or, se-
condly, because the man-child preserveth the memory of the fa-
mily, and is a monument of his fathers honour, his name being
carried on from generation to generation; in opposition to
which, women or females are called *Nashim*, which word impli-
eth forgetfulness, because their names and titles are swallow-
ed up in their husbands, and forgotten when they are mar-
ried.

Memory, or the act of remembring is improperly applied to
God. For remembrance is of things past, but to God all things
are present. Memory is the store-house wherein we lay up sever-
al notions, and keep records of what hath been done, which by
an act of the understanding we review and fetch out again. All
things are ever open before God. He needs not turn leaves or
search Registers, he needs not so much as strain a thought to re-
call what is past; that which was from the beginning, and shall be
to the end, yea, to that which hath no end, eternity, is alwaies be-
fore him. God is said to remember, or to forget when he acts like
a man, who remembers or forgets; but there is no act either of
forgetfulness, or of remembrance in God.

Remembring implieth two things in God.

First, a serious attention to the person and consideration of the
thing which he formerly seemed to slight, or lightly to pass by.
We also remember by minding and thinking upon what is pre-
sent, as well as by recalling what is past.

Secondly, To remember, notes a speedy supply of our wants, or
actual deliverance out of dangers. God remembers us, when he fa-
vours us; he remembers us; when he pities us, he remembers us, when
he relieves us, *Who remembred us in our low estate*, Psal. 136. 23. that
is, who brought us out of our low estate. *The needy shall not alway be
forgotten*

gotten (Psal. 9. 18.) not alway, no nor at any time, the Lord doth not at all forget any, much less such needy ones, as that Scripture intends. The meaning is, they shall not alway be undelivered, their estate shall not lie for ever unconsidered, and their cry unattended to. God will not deal with them, nor suffer others to deal with them, as if he had forgotten them. *Hannah* was long under that affliction of barrenness, and when the Lord gave her conception, it is said, *He remembred Hannah* (1 Sam. 1. 19.) his thoughts were ever upon her, and upon her petition, but when he granted her petition, then he remembered her indeed. As we then remember God, when we obey his commands: so God remembers us then, when he fulfills our requests. *Remember, I beseech thee.*

As it is our duty to remember the Lord, so it is our priviledge that we may put him in remembrance.

It is a priviledge, and a very great one, to be a *remembrancer* to the king of Heaven. The Prophet describes such an office (Isa. 62. 6.) *Ye that make mention of the Lord*, or nearer the Hebrew, *Ye that are the Lords remembrancers*, keep not silence, and give him no rest. Great Princes have an officer called their *Remembrancer*, and they need remembrancers. It is at once their honour and their weakness to have them. They cannot retain all busineses, and preserve a record within themselves of all affairs within their Kingdoms: It is an honour to God that he hath *Remembrancers*, but it is his greater honour that he hath no need of them. Himself is the living record of all that hath been done, or is to be done. Knowledge is above memory, and he that knows all things is above Remembrancers. God is willing we should speak to him after the manner of men: but we must not conceive of him after the manner of men. We must not think he hath forgotten us, though we may beseech him to remember us.

There are four things which the Saints usually move the Lord to remember.

First, His own mercies, *Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies*, was *Dauids* prayer (Psal. 25. 6.) *Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* was *Dauids* question and infirmity (Psal. 77. 9.) yet God acts sometimes, as if he had forgot his nature, or had need to be minded to do what he is. God can no more forget himself, then deny himself, no more forget to be gracious then cease to be: yet he gives his people leave, yea a charge, to move him to do, what he

he cannot but do, what he is resolved, yea what he is ready to do. Mercy pleaseth God so much, that he often appears displeased on purpose, that we may remember him of his mercy. He delights we should desire, what he delights to grant.

Secondly, The Saints usually mind God of his Covenant. *God is ever mindfull of his Covenant* (Psal. 111. 5.) yet he loves to be minded of it. His royal Title is, The God that keepeth Covenant for ever; yet he loves to be desired not to break it. Thus *Jeremy* begs for the *Jews*, the Covenant-people of God, *Do not abhor us for thy name sake, Do not disgrace the Throne of thy glory, remember, break not thy Covenant with us*, Jer. 14. 21. The Psalmist prays upon the same ground, *Have respect to the Covenant for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*. As if he had said Lord, Thou hast made a Covenant to preserve and protect thy people, but now they are oppressed; The dark places, that is, places full of ignorance and wickedness (which are spiritual darkness) are full of cruelty: Holy knowledge hath no such enemy as ignorance. Or *the dark places are full*, &c. may be thus understood, there is no such obscure corner or by place in the land, but their malice searcheth it out for the vexation of thy people. We are so far from having liberty to serve thee publickly in the light, that we feel the cruelty of bloody minded men, though we do it secretly or in the dark. Now Lord, it is time for thee to remember thy Covenant.

Thirdly, The Saints use to put God in remembrance of the rage and blasphemies of his and their enemies. Thus the Church of the *Jews* cries unto the Lord (Psal. 137. 7.) *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, who said, rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof*. When a man is wrong'd who intends revenge, he will say to the party wronging him, well, *Remember this, or, I shall remember you for this*. Revengeful men have strong memories: so hath the God to whom vengeance belongeth. He will certainly remember the sinful, revengeful cry of *Edom* against *Jerusalem*, though the sins of *Jerusalem* did cry to him for vengeance. The Psalmist is as earnest in another place, urging the Lord to remember for his own interest, as here for the interest of his *Sion*, Psal. 74. 18. *Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy Name*. As if he had said, Pray, Lord, take a note of this, make a memorandum of this, *That the enemy hath reproached thy Name*: God will.

will remember it, if any of his servants are reproached, much more when himself is.

Fourthly, The Saints remember God of their own frailty, and that two-fold. First, Natural. Secondly, Spiritual. Remember how short my time is, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? Psal. 89. 47. Man is a frail short-liv'd creature, and it is some comfort to him, that God knows he is so. That which Job puts the Lord in remembrance of, is his natural frailty; some understand it also of his spiritual, Remember, I beseech thee,

That thou hast made me as the clay.

The LXX reads it, *Thou hast made me clay.* The word signifies cement or mortar, which are mixt of earth and water. Thou hast made me as tempered clay. When the original of man is described, it is said, *The Lord formed man dust out of the ground, or, of the dust of the ground, Gen. 2. 7.* here Job saith, *Thou hast made me as the clay, or, Thou hast made me of the clay;* the sense is near the same, whether we take clay for the matter out of which man was made, or for the similitude according to which man was made. Job speaks of himself with respect to creation: for, according to the ordinary course of generation, man is not made of clay. The first man was made of clay, and of him all men are. We derive our pedigree from the dirt, and are a kin to clay. Job might say, and so may any man, *Thou hast made me of the clay.* However Job was, and man now is made as the clay; that is, frail, brittle and weak. We are composed of materials, which will quickly crack and break. When the holy Ghost would describe how easily Christ can shatter to pieces all the opposites of his Kingdom, it is said, *He shall dash them in pieces like a potters vessel.* A potters vessel will not bear blows, especially not the blows of such an instrument, as is there spoken of, *an Iron rod: He shall break them with a rod of Iron (Psal. 2. 9.)* we may break a potters vessel with a little wand, or a weak reed, how then should it endure the weight and hardness of an Iron rod? The Spirit of God seems to delight in this allusion, and therefore takes it up often, Read, *Isa. 45. 9. Isa. 64. 8. Rom. 9. 21.* We have the state of the Jews, described under this notion (*Jer. 18. 4.*) The Lord bids Jeremy go down to the Potters house, he obeys, and found the potter working a work on the wheel, *And the Vessel that he made of clay, was marred in the band of the potter so he made it again ano-*

· ὅτι πλάσας
ἐκ πλάσματος, Sept.
ἔργον

Propre signifi-
cat cementum,
vel terram a-
qua mixtam:

In memoriam
revoca, ut me ē
luto primum, i. e.
primum homi-
nem unde ori-
ceteri formantur
figuli more.
Merc.

ther

ther vessel, as seemed good to the pater to make it. Then, the Word of the Lord came to him, saying, Cannot I do to you as this potter? saith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. I can form you, and I can break you, I can put you into what condition I please, and ye ought not to be displeased at it. A potters vessel is an emblem of the strongest Kingdoms, How much more of the strongest men?

That we are made of clay, intimates three things, at all which Job seemeth to aim, when he saith, *Thou hast made me as the clay.*

First, The excellency of mans frame. He is not thrust together like a rude lump or mass of earth, but *curiously wrought* (Psal. 139. 15.) To make a vessel of clay is an Artificial work, not a natural: It requireth much pains, but more skill. Whence Job argueth, *Thou hast made me as the clay*; Thou hast shewed thy heavenly wisdom in shaping and contriving me, as a vessel of honour for thy use, *And wilt thou bring me into dust again?* The remembrance of that love and care which God hath laid out upon us in our constitution, is an argument moving him to pity and compassion, as was shewed at the third verse.

Secondly, That God hath made us of clay, shews our utter inability to contend with God, and to stand against his strokes: It is, as if Job had said, Lord, Surely thou forgettest of what mettall I am made, thou thinkest I am made of a hard rock, or of invincible Adamant, that I am compounded of Iron, and other the strongest materials; Alas, Lord, there is no such matter, I am made but as the clay; A great deal of power and wisdom appeared in making me, but a little power will serve to ruine me; I am no sooner toucht but crackt. Why then dost thou plant all thy Ordnance, and discharge so many volleys of shot against me? Lord, What am I? Am I a wall of brass, or a bulwark of stone? Thou knowest I am but a wall of clay, a paper wall, a potters vessel, a little moistned earth. Will any man prepare Cannon to batter a Cottage, or a beetle to kill a fly? Thy providence needs not make such provision against me, or handle me so roughly: that which is weak calls for tender usage, and that which is weak may last long, if tenderly used; a glass with care will continue many ages. Deal gently with thy servant, Remember, I beseech thee, thou hast made me as the clay.

Thirdly, That we are made as the clay, shews our easiness to be overcome

overcome by temptation, and our obnoxiousneſs to ſin. Sin is (in its kind) as ſpiritual, as grace is, yet our ſinful corruption is figuratively called, *the fleſh*. One reaſon (I conceive) of which may be this, becauſe fleſh, taken properly, is an occaſion of ſin. As the ſenſitive part is a ſervant, ſo a ſnare to the rational, much more to the ſpiritual. The fleſh is at once the organ, and the burthen of the ſpirit. The Apoſtle calling Saints to run the race of holineſs with patience, gives a very ſutable advice, *Let us lay aſide every weight*, that is, all carnal cumber; he that would ſhew himſelf light of foot, will not take a burden upon his back, he caſts off his very garments; to which the next words of the Apoſtle ſeem to allude, *Caſt off every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us*: So a garment doth, eſpecially a long garment, which in running daggles and folds about our heels. The reaſon why our ſinfull corruption is compared to ſuch a garment, is, becauſe it is ſo much aſſiſted by this body of clay, the fleſh, which is as a long garment to the Soul, hanging about it, and beſetting it, on every ſide.

From which ſenſe Job ſeems thus to move the Lord, *Suppoſe I have ſinned* (he had ſaid, ver. 7.) *Thou knoweſt I am not wicked, but ſuppoſe I have ſinned*) and *have had my failings*, yet, Lord, Remember thou haſt made me as the clay, I am not a pure ſpirit, as Angels are, I have a body of earth about me, which clogs and hinders me in every duty, which many ways endangers me unto every ſin. God himſelf takes up this as an argument to ſpare ſinful man (Pſal. 78. 39) When the people of Iſrael rebelled againſt him, He many a time turned his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath. What ſtaid him? The next words give a reaſon; for he remembered that they were but fleſh; that is, weak and very ſubject unto ſin. This argument prevails again (Pſal. 103. 14.) Like as a father ſpareth his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him; Why? For he knoweth their frame, he remembereth that they are duſt. As if the very matter out of which man was firſt made, though without ſin, were ſome diſadvantage to him in the reſiſting of ſin. It was a diſadvantage before man had any ſin in him, how much more is it now, when moſt men have nothing at all in them but ſin, and the beſt have very much. *That which is born of the fleſh* (ſaith Chriſt, Joh. 3. 6.) *is fleſh*. His meaning is, corrupt nature can produce none but corrupt acts. It is a truth alſo, that our pure nature, becauſe it was conſtituted (as of other parts, ſo)

euangelio, ad circumagendum proclivis: Metaphora ducta à laciniis & talaribus vestibus, quæ currentibus in stadio non sunt aptæ.

Angeli idcirco
irremissibiliter
peccaverunt,
quia tanto ro-
bustius flare
poterant quan-
to eis corporis
commixtio non
tenebat. Greg.
Moral. in loc.

of flesh (the soul like a sparkling diamond, being set in clay) was thereby rendred more prone to fleshly or sinful acts. *Natural flesh (in its best state), is more apt to bring forth spiritual flesh (namely sin) then a spirit is.* And that's a reason among others, which some give, why God was so irreconcilably angry with the Angels which fell, why he did never so much as mention them in a way of mercy, or discovered a thought of them for good since their fall, (I say) one reason given is this, *Because God could not remember that Angels were made as the clay, or formed out of the dust;* They were created spirits, pure spirits, they had no clogs of flesh and bloud about them, no fogs, no mists vapouring up from a sensitive part to cloud their intellectual. They had the more power to continue pure, because they were free from any earthly and elementary mixtures. Their sin was a compound of more evils, because their nature was so simple. Angels having no temper without them, no flesh about them, turned themselves away from God, meerly upon the freedom of their own wills. As every good action is by so much the better, by how much it hath a freer concurrence of our wills: so is every evil action so much the worse. The sin we commit is the greater, by how much we have had the less provocation to commit it. The sin of our first parents in eating of the forbidden fruit, was aggravated in it self, because God gave them such plenty and variety of other fruits to eat: but it was lessened in comparison of the Angels sin, because they had more provocations to sin, then the Angels had. The bait of the temptation against our first parents, was laid in their constitution, which being corporal and earthly, must needs be delighted with earthly objects. *The forbidden fruit was pleasant to the eye, there the flesh took it, And it was pleasant to the taste, there the flesh took it again.* These provocations man had over and besides that of the Angels, a hope or a desire to mend his condition, and to become like unto God. A body of earth hath a suitableness to all earthly allurements. Every like hath a natural tendancy and motion towards its like. This moves the Lord to pity sinful man, though man must not hence plead impunity for sin. The measure and degrees of sin upon such actings are abated, but the acts do not therefore put off the nature of sin. *A sinner in dust and clay cannot be excused, yet is not so much polluted, and more to be pittied then a sinning spirit.* And that's a third notion in which we may expound Job, beseech-
ing

ing to God to remember, that he hath made him as the clay.

I might write many things in this clay out of which man was made; but I have met with other passages already of the same ſubject, eſpecially in the fourth Chapter, verſ. 19. in theſe words, *Whoſe foundation is in the duſt*, which Text being near of the ſame importance and interpretation with this in hand, I ſhall rather refer the Reader thither, then inſiſt upon the ſame deductions and inferences a ſecond time. Take only this in general. Our reflection upon the matter out of which we are extracted, ſhould leſſon us to low and modeſt thoughts of our ſelves: for what is lower than the earth. We ſay, *He that lieth upon the earth hath not whence to fall*; It is as true, *He that riſeth out of the earth, hath nothing in himſelf whence he ſhould be lifted up*.

Materia ex qua ori ſumus nobis ad modeſtiam magiſtra eſſe debet quid enim luto ſuo argilla vilis eſt. Sanct.

Remember that thou haſt made me as the clay, and

Wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?

To be brought to the duſt, is firſt a circumlocution or deſcription of death, *Pſal. 30. 9. Shall the duſt praise thee, ſhall it declare thy truth?* That is, ſhall I praise thee when I am among the dead? *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?* Not that profit ſure, I cannot bring thee in the tribute of praise, when my life's gone out.

Secondly, To be brought to the duſt, is a deſcription of any low and poor condition, *Pſal. 22. 29. All they that be ſat upon the earth* (that is, the great and mighty) *ſhall eat and worſhip, All they that go down to the duſt* (that is, the mean and baſe) *ſhall bow before him*. As if he had ſaid, rich and poor, high and low, the King and the begger, have a like need of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and muſt ſubmit unto him, that they may be ſaved, for as it there follows, *None can keep alive his own ſoul*. The captivity of the Jews in Babylon is expreſſed under thoſe notions of death, and of dwelling in the duſt, *Iſa. 26. 19*. To ſhew how low they were brought; even ſo low, that no power but his, who can raiſe the dead, could work their deliverance.

Job ſaw himſelf brought to the duſt of a low condition, of poverty and of diſgrace, and he feared he ſhould be brought to the duſt of death, and of the grave. That's the meaning of this expoſtulating querie, *And wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?* He was not at all brought out of the duſt of his affliction, and therefore he could not ſay of that, *Wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?*

The words are read three ways.

1. } Assertion.
2. } As an } Interrogation.
3. } } Admiraton,

First, Many Interpreters give them as a plain assertion, Remember, that thou hast made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the dust again.

Secondly, Others read them (as we) with an interrogation, Remember, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into the dust again?

Quoad naturā
vilissimus sum,
quoad judicium
tuum morti ad-
dictus, ut in
pulverem re-
vertar, utramq;
debet te com-
movere, ut par-
cas mihi in vi-
ta. Coc.
Particula pro-
fic sumenda
est, & futurum
potentia est, de-
centiam vel de-
bitum, vel jus,
vel potestatem
denotans, q. d.
sicut metanquā
cementum com-
pegisti, eadem
potestate cum
volueris inter-
ram reduces
nulla mihi illa-
re injuria, Bol.

Thirdly, Some highten them into an admiration, Thou hast made me as the clay, and (what) wilt thou now bring me into the dust again! What a wonder is this? Could I have expected such a sudden change as this!

Take the words as a direct assertion, Thou wilt bring me into the dust again. So they may have reference to the decree of God concerning man, as those before had to the Creation of man. As if he had said, By creation and natural constitution, I am frail and weak, made of the clay, by thy purpose and decree I am appointed unto death, Thou wilt bring me into the dust again, therefore spare me for the short time I have to live.

Some change the conjunction [And] into the adverb of likeness, so, to note a right, power, or priviledge, and the text runs in this form, Remember, that as thou hast made me of, or as the clay, so thou mayst (it is thy priviledge, none can contradict thee in it, and thou doest me no wrong in it, thou mayst) as thou hast purposed, bring me to the dust again. Though it be common and natural to all Creatures mixt of Elements, to be resolved and turned back into that out of which they were made, that is, to die; yet to man it is more then natural; there is a decree upon it, besides the naturality of it: Man dieth by a statute-law of heaven. To die is a penalty inflicted upon man for Sin, for he had not been under a necessity of dying, if he had not sinned. And therefore though God formed man (as the holy story informs us (Gen. 2. 7.) out of the dust of the earth, yet so long as man stood, he never said to him, To dust thou shalt return; God only put a supposition, that in case man did fall, he should surely die. But when man had fallen by sin, then he hears what he was, and what he must be, For dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return (Gen. 3. 19.) As if God had thus bespoken sinful man. Thy body was framed out of dust, and

and now I charge this burden upon thee, thou ſhalt return to the duſt again.

It is a Queſtion (and I ſhall touch upon it.) Whether death were natural to man or no? Whether man were made mortal, or whether he made himſelf mortal? Some affirm, That death was natural, not accidental, or occasional to man-kind. They argue for this opinion.

Fiſt, thus, *Adam* died not the death of the body, or a natural death, when he had ſinned, therefore the death of the body was not inflicted for ſin upon his perſon, and his poſterity, but was ſeated in, or a conſequent of his nature.

I anſwer, Though *Adam* died not preſently a natural death, yet he was preſently made ſubject or liable unto death; the ſentence was paſt upon him, though the ſentence was not executed upon him. A malefactor who is caſt at the barre, is a dead man in law, though he be reprieved from the preſent ſtroke of death.

Again, Though death it ſelf did not inſtantly ſeize upon him, yet the ſymptoms of death, and tokens of mortality did. Fear and ſhame, pains, and diſtempers, ſweat and wearineſs quickly ſhewed themſelves as ſo many harbingers or forerunners of his approaching diſſolution: we ſee and feel death in theſe, before we ſee or feel death it ſelf. Theſe bid us prepare our bodies for the grave, and our ſouls for heaven.

Secondly, Others reaſon thus, Chriſt hath delivered his people, the Eleſt, from all that puniſhment, which the ſin of *Adam* did contract and deſerve; but Chriſt hath not delivered his Eleſt, his own people, from turning to the duſt. Godly men die as well as the ungodly, believers as well as infidels, therefore (ſay they) the death of the body was not procured by ſin.

I anſwer, Whatſoever is an evil in death, Chriſt hath delivered his people from; he hath taken away all that from death, which is puniſhment or annoyance, though death be not taken away. Chriſt hath freed us from the effects of ſin, as he hath freed us from ſin it ſelf, that is, from their prevalence and dominion over us, not from their preſence or being in and upon us. Hence the Apoſtle (1 Cor. 15.) triumpheth over death, *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?* As if he had ſaid, Death once had a power over man to ſting him to death, death once had a victorious power, and would have been the great conquerour

conquerour, riding in triumph over all the posterity of *Adam*: but now death hath neither sting nor sword to use against believers, it hath nothing of victory over the Saints. It is now but a sleep, a sleep in Christ, a rest from labour, a putting off the rags, the worn rags of mortality, that we may be dress'd in the robes of glory. The evil of death is removed, and that which remains of death (the separation of the soul and body) proves the greatest good to both, it being but a preparatory to their everlasting union.

Omne principium
sequitur
naturam prin-
cipiorum.

Thirdly, It is argued, That death and corruption were natural to man, because the matter out of which man was made, was dying and corruptible; for that which is made, must follow the nature of that principle out of which it is made. The effect cannot be (say they) more noble then the cause, nor the subject constituted, more durable then that which goes into its constitution.

To clear up an answer to this, we must distinguish of a three-fold immortality.

1. A primitive, simple, independent, essential immortality; this is proper and peculiar to God, in which sense the Apostle affirmeth, *He only hath immortality* (1 Tim. 6. 16.)

2 There is a derivative, dependant, essential immortality. Some substances have no seed of corruptibility, nor of death in them. Being either separate from all matter, which is the seat and root of corruption, as the Angels, or united to matter, yet so as not being produced from it, or having any affinity with it, such are the souls of men. Whole man in his creation was not immortal either of these wayes, a part of man was, but man was not created immortal: Man was of a middle state and condition, neither altogether so mortal, nor altogether immortal, but capable of either.

μέσος ὅνθρωπος
πρὸ τῶν δυνάμεων
ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος
τὸ ἐλθὲν ἐπὶ
ἀθανάτου δέκ-
τερος καὶ ὁ ἐκ-
τερος Grac Int.

3. There is an immortality by the power or gift, by the mercy or justice of God. The power and justice of God shall give an immortality to the bodies of the damned in hell, they shall ever live a dying life, who were dead all the while they lived. They who have slighted the mercy of God, shall be upheld by his power, to endure his justice to all eternity; wicked men would have sinned with delight for ever upon the earth, if they could have lived for ever upon the earth, and they shall live for ever with pain in hell to suffer for their sin.

The power, goodness and mercy of God, shall much more give

give immortality to the bodies of the Saints in glory; they who have had a will to delight in obeying God that short time they lived on earth, shall have a power to live for ever in delight, praising God in heaven.

The body of man in the state of innocency had an immortality, by the gift of God; yet with condition, that he did submit to that rule which God gave him to live by. *Do this and live, was the law of Adams life.* Adam had not an impossibility to die, but a possibility not to die; this was the state of immortality in the state of innocency. Man had not fallen into the grave, if he had not fallen into transgression. His life was made as long as his obedience; if he had not turned from God, he had not turned to the earth. Death was conveyed in by sin; and our possibility not to die, was not only lost, but changed into a necessity of dying. So then, man is brought to dust, not because his nature was subject to corruption, but because sin hath corrupted his nature. When he abused the liberty of his will, he was subjected to this necessity against his will. By an irreverfible ordinance of heaven, *It is appointed unto men once to die*, Heb. 9. 27. Job speaks, to that point of Gods law concerning man, *Thou hast made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the dust again.*

Thus the words are taken as an assertion of the power and privilege of God, to unmake and pull down man, whom he had made and set up.

If we read the words by way of interregation or admiration: so Job seems to intend them as an allay to mitigate the present severity of the Lords proceeding with him, *Thou hast made me of the clay, but a while ago, and wilt thou bring me into the dust again? O spare me a little before I go hence, and shall be seen no more: It will not be long before there must be an end of me, O let me have a more comfortable being and breathing, while I am here.*

When Satan provoked the Lord against Jerusalem, to destroy it, the Lord answered (Zech. 3. 2.) *Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* As if he had said unto Satan, Art thou moving me to throw this people into the fire of affliction, out of which they were so lately snatcht? Jerusalem was in the fire but a while ago, and shall I cast it in again? Job pleads in the same form, though not in the same matter, I was clay but the other day, and Lord, shall I to dust again to day? Let me see some quiet days, before I see the end of my days. Gild over this clay of mine with the
shinings.

Adamus habuit potentiam non moriendi, non impotentiam moriendi.

Adamus peccans non solum potuit mori, sed non potuit non mori.

Quicumque dicit Adamum primum hominem mortalem factum, ita ut si ve peccaret si ve non peccaret, moreretur in corpore hoc est, de corpore exiret non peccati merito, sed necessitate naturae; Anathema sit, Concil. Melivit, Can. 1.

shinings of thy face upon me, before thou renderest me dust again.

I have more then once had occasion to touch this argument, and shall therefore pass it here.

Job having thus set forth his natural constitution, in the matter of it, as he was made of clay, goeth on to describe himself more distinctly; first, in his conception of his whole body; secondly, in the formation and delineation of his parts.

Verse 10. *Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me like cheese?*

*Latit simile in-
itio emen, po-
stes admirabili
Dei opere non
focis ac caceus
concresecit, &
consolidatur, ut
membra paula-
tim conformari
incipiant.*

*Notat rei liqui-
de concretionem
vel condensa-
tionem.*

*δίου ἐν τῇ τῇ
γάλακτι & πῶ
ξεντὸ μὲν οὐ
μα τὸ γάλακτι
εἰν, &c. Arist.
de gen. Ani-
mal. c. 20.*

*Miseret atq; e-
tiam pudet, &
stimularem quā
sit frivola ani-
mation super-
bissimorum ori-
- Plin l 7 c 7*

Under the modest shadow of this verse, that great natural mystery of mans generation and conception is contained. The former word signifies not only the pouring forth of Liquids, but the melting and dissolving of the hardest mettals, Iron, Brass, &c. that they may be fitted to run or be poured forth, *Ezek. 22. 21, 22.* And as this signifies the softning and melting of that which is hard, so the next word (which we translate *crudled*) signifies the hardening or thickening of that which is soft and fluid. *Moses* useth it in describing the miraculous dividing of the red-sea, *Exod. 15. 8.* The floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the Sea. The Prophet *Zephany* useth it for the settledness and resolvedness of a people in sin (*Chap. 1. 12.*) The Lord (saith he) will punish the men that are settled (we put in the margin *crudled* or *thickned*) on their lees. I might from these proprieties of the original words, illustrate that secret of mans original. But forasmuch as the spirit of God hath drawn a curtain, and cast a vail of metaphors over it, therefore I intend not to open or discover it. Ancient Philosophers have spoken of these natural operations in a like language, and under these similitudes: I shall only say in general, that these two expressions; First, *Thou hast poured me out as milk*; Secondly, *And crudled me like cheese*, are applicable to that special contribution, which God hath charged upon each parent, towards that great work, the continuation of their own kind, and the raising up of a posterity in their place, to serve himself and their generation. Learn hence,

First, *That man hath reason to be humbled at the meanness and manner of his original.*

What hath he to be proud of in the world, who that he might be

be prepared for his coming into the world, was poured out as milk, and crudled as cheese. Let not man be high minded, whose beginning was so low and homely.

Learn secondly, *Our natural conception is from God.*

Men (in a strict sense) are called, *The fathers of our flesh, and God the father of our spirits* (Heb. 12. 9.) Yet God hath the chief title to the father-hood of our flesh, as well as the sole title to the fatherhood of our spirits, *Thou hast poured me out as milk, and thou hast crudled me like cheese*; here is no mention of his father, none of his mother, but as if the Lord had brought all by an immediate power, he ascribes the whole effect to him. *Thou hast poured me out as milk, &c.* We are also his off-spring, as the Apostle tells the Athenians out of their own Poets, *Acts* 17. 28.

Nil de genitoribus aut seminibus nascitur, si es non operetur Deus.
August. in *Psal.* 118.

Thirdly, This gives caution to all whom the Lord hath called, or shall call to the state of marriage, to be holy in that estate. *Marriage is honourable* (Heb. 13. 4.) *and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*; no wonder if God have a respectfull eye to the undefiled in that relation, and a revengefull eye upon the defilers of it; seeing as his own authority instituted it, so his own power acts so eminently in it. Our conception, our formation, our birth and production are all ascribed to, yea assumed by God himself. Of which second act the next verse gives us a noble and an elegant proof.

Vers. 11. *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and fenced me with bones and sinews.*

Job proceeds like a great Philosopher about the production of man. For when by that former work of nature, the matter is poured out and crudled. God by nature makes a further progress, and prepares for another work, the forming and fashioning of that unshapen lump into the parts and lineaments of an organical body. Some Naturalists undertake to tell us exactly what is wrought in the first seven dayes, and what the next, when the brain, heart and liver are formed, and when the flesh, the bones and sinews. The ancient and learned Physicians have distinguished this whole work of God in perfecting mankind into four periods. The first is, while the matter or principles out of which man is made being mingled together, retain their own form. The second is, when those principles are grossed into a rude fleshy masse. These two periods *Job* hath taught us long

Semen in utero mulieris. primis septem diebus conglobatur, coagulatur, fitque ad capiendam figuram idoneum.
Gel.

Cal. l. 7. de sem. ex doctrina Hippocratis.

before *Galen* and *Hippocrates* in the former verse, under those notions of *pouring out as milk, and crudding as cheese*. The third period is, when a representation is made of those principal parts, the brain, the heart, and the liver, together with the threeds, and (as some allude) the warp of mans constitution, or as others, the lines and shadowes of a man, such as a skilful artisan makes with a ruder pencil, when he is about to draw a curious picture. The fourth period is, when both the similar and organical parts, are compleated and also beautified with proper and lively colours. These two later periods are described by *Job* in this verse, and in the beginning of the next.

Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh.

לְבָשׁ בְּלִישָׁא

Nudavit.

The original word for *skin*, comes from a root signifying *naked*. We commonly say he is naked, who hath nothing upon him, but his skin. And *Job* who here saith, *Thou hast clothed me with skin*, said, *Chap. 1. 20. Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither*: That is, with nothing but my skin. He that wears only skin and flesh hath no artificial clothing, but he hath a natural clothing. We are dressed in garments taken out of the Wardrobe of God and nature before the world puts a rag upon us. Thus man is born naked, yet clothed, unarmed, yet fenced.

Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, &c.

Pellis ita dicta
quod externas
inurias agen-
do repellat.

Druf.

Ulterior pro-
greditur in for-
matione fetus,
nam post con-
solidatum se-
men & forma-
re jam membra,
excedunt extrin-
secus cutis &
caro, ad prote-
genda interiora,
que absq; hoc
velut sepimen-
to & munimen-
to essent obno-
is & exposita
periculis. Mer-

Which some interpret in reference to the soul, which is covered over and enclosed with the skin and flesh.

But this clothing of skin and flesh refers rather to those inward, more noble and tender parts, the heart, liver, brain and bowels, these are enclosed with skin and flesh, lest they should take cold; these are fenced with bones and sinews, lest they should take hurt. Hence death is called an *unclothing*. Death strips us, not only to the skin, but of the skin, *We that are in this tabernacle, do groan, being burthened, not for that we would be unclothed, (2 Cor. 5. 4.)* that is, not that we would put off this garment of skin and flesh, this natural clothing, but we would have a super-natural clothing upon it, even a vest of glory put upon these vests of frailty. This Scripture in *Job* is of the same language with that of *Paul*, *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh.*

It is said of the vertuous woman (*Prov. 31. 21.*) *That she is not affraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are all clothed with skarlet, or double garments.* The great and most wise God hath prepared such clothing for mans inward parts, that he needs not fear snow or cold, he hath provided double garments, two suites, skin and flesh. Flesh is an under garment, and skin is an upper garment: flesh covers the bones, and skin covers the flesh. Anatomists observe, that man hath two distinct coates of skin upon his flesh, or mans skin is a lined garment, yet differing from other garments, for here the lining is uppermost. This uppermost skin, or as some call it, the *scarf-skin* is without sense, you may thrust a needle thorow it without pain. There was great reason it should be so, that it might defend the skin under it from external injuries, as also attemper the exquisite sense thereof, and so become the *medium* or mean of touching: for all sensation is made by some mean, and is either altogether hindered, or much disturbed by the immediety of the object and the organ. Hence when this cuticle or *scarf-skin* is off or broken, the gentlest touch upon that bared part, breedeth much pain, but spoileth the true sensation. Under this curtain or *scarf-skin*, the true and proper skin lyeth; The Greeks call it *δέρμα* because it may be flayed off, or *δέσμα*, quasi *δέμα*, a band, because it compasseth or knitteth together the whole body. This skin is a seamless garment, yet it hath diverse out-lets made for the relief and ease of nature; some of which are obvious to sense, others called *pores*, are both innumerable and imperceptible.

To this double vesture of skin, *flesh* is added, as having according to *Jobs* philosophy, an immediate conjunction or contiguity with one another. But our Philosophers in their professed descriptions of mans Anatomy, place two parts between the skin and the flesh, namely *fat* and *the fleshy membrane*. Concerning which, they who please may consult the writings of learned Naturalists. I shall not step out into such digressions.

Further, As God hath given us a clothing of skin and flesh: so he hath given us armour under that clothing. *Thou hast fenced me with bones and sinews.*

The word which we translate *fenced*, is the same used, *Chap. 1. 10.* where Satan tells the Lord that he hath secured the state of *Job*, so, that he could not come nigh it, *Hast not thou made an hedge about him?* The devil made many assaults against *Job*, but he

could not batter down that hedge, it was cannon-proof. As the state, so the body of *Job* was fenced: if we look upon the skelleton of a man, we shall see the proportion of an armour, brest and back formed up with *bones and sinews*.

ΠΙΠΣΥ
ossa d' robore
et firmitate
disa.

Bones are for strength, and sinews for motion, bones being firm and stiff in themselves are moveable by the sinews. There are other parts of the body which concur to the making up of this armour, gristles, muscles, ligaments, membranes, all which serve for motion, fastning, and defence, as well as *bones and sinews*: but these being the principal and most known are here expressed for all the rest.

ἡ δὲ τῶ σώματος
καὶ ὁρμή
καὶ εἰς
καὶ ἐκτετα.
Hippocr.

Bones give the body stability, straightness and form. They are as the carcase of a Ship, whereto the rest of the parts are fastned, and by which they are sustained. They are as the posts, pillars, beams and rafters of a house, by whose knittings and contiguations the whole building is both proportioned and supported. And though the bones are for number very many, and in their forms exceeding various, some thick, some thin, some plain, some hollow, some of a greater, others of a lesser bore, yet are they so connected and fitted together by articulation or by coalition, by contiguity or continuity (as the Anatomists speak) that they all appear as one bone, or pack of bones.

Sinews or nerves derive their pedigree from the brain, and are the organs by which the animal spirits are conveyed, and flow into the whole body, and with them both sense and motion. Sinews have so much of strength in them, that the same word is put to signifie both strength and sinews; and to do a thing strongly and vigourously, is to do it (*nervosè*) sinewously. It is wonderful which Naturalists write of the conjugations and uses of the sinews, to those labours I refer the studious Reader for further satisfaction. I have given enough to shew, what this Text calls me to, *That God hath indeed clothed man with skin and flesh, and fenced him with bones and sinews.*

Some have quarrelled with the wisdom and goodness of God, for turning man altogether naked and unarmed into the world. This Scripture is enough to confute the unreasonableness of that quarrel. *Job* thankfully acknowledgeth, That he was both clothed and armed, though not in the sence of these complainers. It is more honourable for man to make himself artificial clothing and arms, then to have had none but natural; God hath given man
reason

reason to invent, hands to prepare, and a tongue to call for those things, which by a Law of nature are imposed upon other creatures; the power of reason, and the skill of the hand are a better safeguard to man then any the beasts have, and can provide whatsoever man wants to secure him either from cold or danger. And though the body, as now it stands, be but (as it were) the sepulchre of that which God at first created, though we lie open to so many diseases and deaths, that the soul may well be said to inhabit an unwalled, and an unfortified City, yet man hath great cause for ever to extol the bounty of God in those still continued ennoblements of this earthly mansion, his mortal body. Yea, the noble structure and symmetry of our bodies, invites our souls not only to thankfulness, but to admiration. One of the Ancients stileth man *a great miracle*. Another, *The miracle of miracles*: A third, *The measure of all things*: A fourth, *The pattern of the universe, the worlds epitome, The world in a small volume, or a little world*. They also have distinguished the whole frame of the body into three stories, in allusion to a like frame observable in the world. First, the superiour, which they call intellectual or angelical, because they conceived it to be the habitation of Angels or Intelligences. The second or middle part they call celestial or heavenly, the seat of the Sun and Starrs. The third, Elementary, in which all corporeal creatures are procreated and nourished. This division of the world is eminent in man, for he also is a building of three stories. The head, which is the seat of reason, the mansion, the tower of wisdom and understanding, is placed highest: the breast or middle venter is the celestial part, wherein the heart, like the Sun, is predominant; some have called the Sun, *The heart of the World*; and the heart, *The Sun of mans body*, by whose lustre, beams and influences, all the other parts are quickned and refreshed; hence we say, when the heart failes all failes, and while the heart holds, all holds. The third part of the body, or the lower venter containing all parts necessary for the nutrition of individuals, or the propagation of the species, carrieth a cleare resemblance with the elementary or the lowest parts of the universe.

There are five things in particular, which as so many rounds of a ladder, may help us to raise our thoughts higher in the duty of holy admiration about this work of God.

First, That God frameth up this goodly and beautiful fabrique
out

out of such mean and improbable materials. To consider out of what stuff our bodies are made, advanceth the honour of him who made us. Man can make his work (except the form) no better then the matter out of which he formeth it. But as the form of mans body is better then the matter, so the matter becomes better then it was, before it received that form.

Secondly, The matter out of which God maketh man is originally homogeneal, or but of one kind, yet there is a strange heterogeny or variety in the very substance, as well as in the shape of the several parts; which are therefore divided by the survaiers of this building, into parts similar and dissimilar. Is it not incredible to meer reason, that one lump should be spread out into thin, tender skin, wrought into soft flesh, extended into tough sinews, hardned into strong bones; that one piece should make an outward jerkin or cassock of skin, an under garment of flesh, columns and rafters of bones, bands and ties of sinews; that the same should make veins like channels to carry, and blood like water to be carried into every part to moisten and refresh it? When an Artificer buildeth an house, he requires more materials then one, he must have stones and timber, iron, lead, &c. to compleat his fabrique: but the Lord frameth all the parts, rooms and contrivances of the body out of one and the same mass. *Thou dost not know* (saith Solomon) *how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with childe* (Eccles. 11. 5.) Who can know by a meer rational demonstration, how a solid substance should grow out of that which is so fluid? And that parts materially, as well as figuratively unlike, should arise out of a like matter?

Thirdly, The work of God in the framing of man is internal, as well as external. A statuary, or an engraver will make the image or pourtraiture of a man, but his work is all outward, he cannot make bowels, or fashion a heart within, he cannot cut out veins, bones and sinews. The greatest wonders of creation are unseen. God hath packt many rarities, mysteries, yea, miracles together in mans chest. All the vital instruments and wheels, whereby the watch of our life is perpetually moved from the first hour to the last, are locked up in a curious internal cabinet, where God himself prepared the pulleys, hung on the weights, and wound up the chime by the hand of his infinite power, without opening of any part. As our own learned

Ana-

*Quomodo ex re
tantula & sibi
simili, tam va-
ria & discre-
pantes partes
existerunt; hæc
profecto est stu-
penda omnino
opificii nostri
sapientia &
in ad quicquid
efficiendum.
Merl.*

Anatomist elegantly teacheth us in the Preface to his sixth book.

Fourthly, The dimensions, proportions and poise of mans body are so exact and due, that they are made the model of all structures and artificials. Castles, Houses, Ships, yea the Ark of Noah was framed after the measure and plot of mans body. In him is found a circular figure, and a perfect quadrat, yea the true quadrature of a circle, whose imaginary lines have so much troubled the Mathematicians of many ages.

Fifthly, In every part usefulness and commodiousness, comeliness and convenience meet together. What beauty is stamp't upon the face? What Majesty in the eye? What strength is put into the armes? What activity into the hands? What musick and melody in the tongue? Nothing in this whole fabrique could be well left out or better placed, either for ornament, or for use. Some men make great houses which have many spare rooms, or rooms seldom used; but as in this house there is not any one room wanting, so every room is of continual use.

Was ever clay thus honoured, thus fashioned? *Galen* gave *Epicurus* an hundred years to imagine a more commodious scituation, configuration or composition of any one part of the body; And surely if all the Angels in heaven had studied to this day, they could not have cast man into a more curious mould, or have given a fairer and more correct edition of him. *This clay cannot say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? Or this work, be hath no hands,* (Isa. 45. 9.) The Lord hath made man so well, that man cannot tell which way to be made better; This work cannot say, He that wrought me had no hands, that is, I am ill wrought. As to say, you have no eyes, you have no ears, are reproofs of negligence and inadvertency, both in hearing and seeing. So when we say to a man, Surely you have no hands, our meaning is, he hath done his work, either sloathfully or unskilfully. But this work of mans body shall not need to say unto God, he hath no hands, he hath given proof enough, that hands and head too were imployed about this work. Let us make it appear that we have hands and tongues, and hearts for him, that we have skin and flesh, bones and sinews for him, that we have strength, and health, and life, and all for him; seeing all these are also derived from him, as appears in the next words, *Thou hast granted me life and favour.* *Job*

Job having thus described the natural conception and formation of his body, descendeth to his quickning and preservation. When God had formed man out of the dust of the earth, he then breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul; and thus when God hath formed man into the womb, given him skin and flesh, bones and sinews, then he gives life and breath and all things necessary, to the continuation of what he hath wrought up to such excellent perfections. Our divine Philosopher teaches us this doctrine.

Verse 12. *Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*

This verse holds out to us the great Charter of God to man, consisting of three royall grants. First, Life. Secondly, Favour. Thirdly, visitation. The bounty of God appears much in granting life, more in granting favour, most of all in his grant of gracious visitations. *Thou hast granted me life, &c.*

וַיַּחְיֵנִי
Vitas fecisti.
Mouit.
Vitam disposu-
isti mihi. Sep.
Quasi debito
loco et ordine.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Thou hast made, or fitted for me life and favour.* The soul is the ornament of the body, life the lustre of our clay. Thou hast not thrown or huddled my life into my body, thou hast put it in exquisitely and orderly. The frame of the body is an exquisite frame, but the frame, the faculties, and powers, the actings and motions of the soul are far more exquisite. The inhabitant is more noble then the house, and the jewel then the cabinet. *As the life is better then meat, and the body then (artificiall) raiment (Mat. 6.25.)* So the life is better then the body, which is to it a natural rayment.

Thou hast granted me life, &c.

Life is here put metonymically for the soul, of which it is an effect, as the soul is often put for the life, whereof it is a cause.

We translate in the singular number, *life*, the Hebrew is plural, *Thou hast granted me lives.* But hath a man more lives then one? Some understand Job speaking not of corporall, but spirituall life; as our natural life is the salt of the body, to keep that from corrupting: so spiritual life, or the life of grace, is the salt of the soul, to keep that from corrupting.

Secondly, *Thou hast granted me lives*, that is, say others, temporal life and eternal life.

Thirdly, *Lives* may be taken for three great powers of life.

Mm

Man hath own life consisting of three distinct lives: For whereas there is a life of vegetation and growth, such as is in trees and plants: and a life of sense and motion, such as is in beasts of the earth, fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea: And a life of reason, such as is in Angels, whereby they understand and discourse: these three lives, which are divided and shared among all other living creatures, are brought together and compacted into the life of man. Whole man, is the epitome or sum of the whole Creation, being enriched and dignified with the powers of the invisible world, and of the visible put together, under which notion we may expound this Text, *Thou hast granted me lives*; a threefold life, or a threefold acting and exercise of the same life.

Thou hast granted,

Observe hence, *Life is the gift of God.*

With thee is the fountain of lives, the well, or *the veins of lives* (Psal. 36. 9.) The Psalmist alludes, either first to waters which flow from a fountain, and so doth life from God. Or, secondly, to mettals, *With thee is the vein of lives*; as all minerall veins, the veins of gold and silver, of lead and iron, &c. lye (as it were) in bank, in the bosome and bowels of the earth: so doth life in God. There is not the least vein of this quick-silver, in all the world, but comes from him. Or, thirdly, The Psalmist alludeth to the veins of the body, which as so many rivers and rivolets, derive their blood from that red sea the liver. God hath a sea of life in himself, and all that live are fill'd with life from him. This is one of his Royal Titles, *The living God*; He is, *The living God*, not only *subjective*, because he liveth, but *effective*, because he enliveneth and quickneth all living creatures, *From him we receive life and breath* (Acts 17. 25.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, vers. 28. *In him we live, &c.* that is, *by him*, or *thorow him*, as the same Apostle teacheth (Rom. 11. 36.) The same power giveth us being, and maintains it. This is true, yet the context carrieth the preposition [*In*] further. For the Apostle having asserted, *verse 37. He is not far from every one of us*; subjoyns this as a proof, *For in him we live, &c.* implying, that man is, in a sense, contained in, or invested with God. The divine nature cannot be circumscrib'd with any thing, yet circumscribeth all things: For which Paul refers the Athenians to Heathen Poets who

מקור חיים
Vene vitarum.

Jovis omnia
plena. Virg.
Iupiter est æ-
ther, est terra
Iupiter cælum-
que et omnia
Iupitur, & si-
quid supra
Eschyl.

spake this truth in a carnal language, yet such as might be spiritu-
aliz'd by a sanctified understanding. The result of which is, *Thou*
God is the author and conservator of our lives. This glory is given
also unto Christ, who is called, *The Prince of life*, because he
hath life at command, *The Son quickeneth whom he will.* Christ
hath the power, not only of natural, but of spiritual and eter-
nall life, *He is the Prince of lives.* Job speaks in the language of
Princes, *Thou hast granted, &c.* As they make out grants of lands
and offices, so God makes a grant of life. The civil godship of
Kings and Magistrates appears much in this, that they can grant a
forfeited life, either by reprieve for a time, or by pardon for ever.
It is ordinary with men, to grant others leases for their lives,
but they cannot grant them life. Princes can grant an offender
a lease of that life which he hath, but no Prince can grant life to
those who have it not. That's Gods peculiar, *Thou hast granted*
me life.

And favour.

707
Denotat in pon-
sum stultum vel
exuberantiam
boni. Coc.

Augusta inno-
centia est se-
cum dum leges
justum esse; la-
tius officiorum
piet quam juris
regula. Quam
multa pietas,
humanitas,
liberalitas es-
igunt, quae om-
nia extra pub-
licas tabulas
sunt? Sen. l. 2.
de ira.

Virtutum quae-
dam semina
tribuisti mihi
& praesentim
misericordia,
quam sibi inna-
tam ipse fate-
tur, Job 31. 1.
Aquin.

* Liberum ar-
bitrium tribu-
isti mihi.
Cajet.

The word signifieth the purest, sincerest and most tender
kindness, the fullest favour, the most courteous courtesie, *Gen.*
21. 13. Chap. 24 49. *Exod.* 15. 13. *Ruth.* 1. 8. Hebreians tell us.
That it noteth an exuberancy of kindnesse, such as breaks the
bounds, and exceeds the ordinary laws of love. It is but a poor
way of loving, to love only by rule and measure. There is no
true love can act beyond the rule which God gives, but love
quickly exceeds the rules of men. Hence the Jews call those
Chasidim, who are not only just by statute, giving every man his
right, paying every man his due, but noble, heroically, free-heart-
ed and open-handed in their distribution of favours.

One Expositor by *favour* understands the seeds of grace and
vertue, especially of charity and mercifulness, which (saith
he) seem to have been connatural to Job.

Another interprets *favour* by **free-will*. But I pass these as per-
versions, not expositions of Scripture. And shall represent what is
both safe and suitable.

First, Some restrain this *favour* to that which he received in the
womb before he was born, or the favour which he had to be
born, which is to be reckoned among very fallible favours.
Thou art he that took me out of the womb, was Davids thankfull ac-
knowledgement, *Psal.* 22. 9. The womb is to all infants a tempo-
rary

rary

gary prison, and to some a grave. It is favour to have those gates unlockt, and the little prisoner set safe at liberty.

Secondly, We may interpret it as an *adjunct*, or an *adverb*, shewing how the Lord granted him life; It is an usual Hebraisme to put the latter of two Substantives adverbially, *Josh. 2. 14: We will deal kindly and truly with thee*, say the Spies to Rahab. The Original is, *We will deal kindness and truth to thee*, which is also rendered kindness in truth, or kindness truly, that is, thou mayest trust us: we do not flatter thee, and we will not deceive thee. So here, *Thou hast granted me life and favour*; That is, life by favour, or life favourably; importing, that the receipt of life is the receipt of a great mercy; as it *Job* had said, *I could not deserve that thou shouldest bestow life upon me: When I was formed and fashioned in the womb, it was thy favour to quicken me: Mercy put breath into those tender principles, and first rudiments of my body.* And seeing not only sense and motion, are brought in by life, but reason also, and all the noble operations of it, *Job* had reason enough to say, *Thou hast granted me life*, as a great, or with abundant favour. Hence observe,

Hebraismus est quando ex duobus, simul positis substantivis unum adverbialiter sumitur alterumque determinat.
Bold.

Life is a speciall favour of God.

There are divers sorts of creatures which have not the favour of life bestowed on them, no not the lowest degree of life. The Lord hath given man not only life, but the highest degree of life; this is a high favour. It was Satans argument (*Chap. 2.*) *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*; As if he had said, *What is a mans body to his life? what are his estate, his lands, his gold and silver? what are all these dead commodities to his life? Life is the most precious of naturall blessings.* A worm (under this consideration) is a more noble creature then the Sun, because a worm hath life, which the Sun hath not. *The lowest of a Superiour order, is better then the highest of an inferiour*; Though the Sun be the excellentest of all animate creatures, yet it moves (though in heaven) in a lower orb, then any thing that lives groveling on the earth. A leaf is more excellent then a Pearl or Diamond, because a leaf hath life in it, which these have not; That opinion of voluptuous Atheists, or Epicures, delivered us by the Preacher, hath a truth in it, *A living dog is better then a dead Lyon* (*Eccl. 9. 4.*) For though (as that voice spake from heaven, *Rev. 14. 13.*) *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord*, and though cursed are the living that live without the Lord: In which sense the poorest

dead Dog is better then the proudest Lyon alive ; yet, consider man only within the line and compass of naturall life ; then he that lives in the worst condition, is better then he that once was in highest dignity, but now is dead. It is usual in Scripture by a Dog to set forth the vilest estate of a man, and the most excellent by a Lyon. When *Mephibosheth* would shew how low he was in his own eyes, though the son of a noble Prince, he joyns these two, *Dead, and a Dog together*, 2 Sam. 9. 8. *What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am ?* He calls himself not only a dog, as Christ did the woman of *Canaan*, and she acknowledged her self to be, but to lay himself as low as lowness it self, he calls himself a *dead dog*, implying, that life giveth some honour, and casteth a lustre upon every subject, which it inhabits, though it be the meanest. When *Esau* was near perishing with hunger (*Gen. 25. 32.*) he resolves thus, *I am at the point to dye, and what profit should this birth-right do to me ?* As if he had said, Shall I keep my birth-right, and lose my life ? my life is more precious. Thus he spake, and he spake profanely in it ; yet there is some truth in what he spake ; for if we take birth-right precisely in the notion of a civil priviledge ; so life is better then a birth-right ; but he is called profane *Esau*, because there was a spiritual priviledge in his birth-right, which he ought to have valued above his life. Any spiritual good thing is better then naturall life, but life is the best of naturall, and better then all civil good things. When the Prophet would expresse how great a blessing a King was to his people, he called him, *The breath of their nostrils*, Lam 4. 29. and, *live for ever*, was the highest apprecation given the *Babylonian Kings*. The most noble imitations of art are about this piece of nature : It is the ambition of a painter to draw to the life, or to shadow the motions and actings of life. When we would commend a picture, we say, It is done to the life ; how precious a favour is reall life, the very shadow of which is of so great a price ? He that layeth down his life, payeth the greatest debt, whether to justice or to nature. Christ went to the highest price for, and shewed the greatest favour to sinners, when he parted with, and pawned this Jewel for them, his precious life.

This should minde parents, as to pray for quickning after conceptions, so to give thanks when the Embryon is quickned.

Now

Now if this naturall life be such a favour, What is spiritual and eternal life? *Thou hast given me life and favour, or life as a favour.*

Thirdly, By *favour*, in conjunction with life, we may understand the accidents of life; that is, those good things which accompany and accommodates our lives, *Thou hast given me life*, not a bare life, not a meer subsistence or being in the world, but with life thou hast also given me favour, many mercies and comforts to make my life sweet and pleasant to me.

Besides, *favour* takes in not only those outward comforts of health, strength, liberty, plenty, but those inward ornaments of life also; good education, and instruction in knowledge, both humane and divine. It appears, *Job* had a fair portion of these favours. His was not a naked, but a cloathed soul, a soul gilded and engraven all over with heavenly truths.

So that *Job* in this word reports the bounty and munificence of God towards him, in all the former additions and accomplishments of his life. Many have lives which they scarce look upon as a favour. *Some accidents of life, are more worth then the substance of it. Our well-being is better then our being.* It may prove a desirable favour to be rid of life. In which sense *Job* spake of himself at the first verse of this Chapter, *My soul is weary of my life.* His life was then a burden, but once a favour. *Thou hast granted me life with favour.*

Fourthly, *Job* may here intend spirituall and eternal favour. *Chesed* signifies the grace or favour of God in Christ (*Psal. 89. 33.*) *My loving kindness will I not take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.* If he fail in duty, I will chasten him in mercy, I will not remove mercy from him. The Vulgar translates, *Thou hast given me life and mercy*, which some expound of that special mercy, the pardon of his sin, and his washing from original corruption; As if *Job* had said, I partake not only of life, but also of that which is better then life it self, Thy favour or loving-kindness, *Psal. 63. 4* The favour of God in spirituall things, (in pardoning sin, in regenerating the soul, in sending the holy Spirit) is the perfection of his favour. What is man without that favour which makes him a son of God, but even a beautiful, or at most, a rationally beast? as *David* calls him, *Psal. 49. 21.* And should a man give thanks for outward favours only without any reflection upon spiritual; a beast, could he speak, might give such

Chesed omnia beneficia Dei promiscue complectitur Coc. Non solum vitam dedit, sed cumulasit bonis omnibus quæ ad vitam, honorem, et rem vitæ necessariam pertinent.

Hoc nomine complectitur etiam omnia beneficia, quæ ultra vitam Deus h. min. concedit, dum educandum eum, instituendum et informandum in lege sua et timore curat. Merc.

Quoniam Chesed significat aliquid perfectum in amore; id circa statum Jobum hic intelligere istam a. p. m. sive studium quod Deus exercet erga suos quos facit filios suos in Christo, Coc.

such thanks. The life of sense and growth is a mercy, but beasts and plants live thus: The life of reason is a greater mercy, but wicked men live thus; many are in hell, unto whom God granted this life, and they would be glad God would call in his grant, and take it from them: But unto these three lixes God adds a fourth to his elect, even a life of grace through Jesus Christ. This is the favour of favours, and the blessing of all our blessings, except this favour be granted with our lives, it were better for us never to have had a grant of our lives. It is more eligible not to have been born, then not to be born again.

*Chesed sumitur
pro venustate
corporis. Coc.*

There is a fifth Interpretation, taking the word *Chesed* for corporall favour, or the beauty of the body, we say, such an one is well favoured, he hath an excellent feature; the favour of a man is seen in the feature of his face. Favour is the perfection of beauty. Some have a clear mixture of white and red, yet no favour. In this sense the word is used (*Isa. 40. 6.*) Where the Lord makes a proclamation, *The voice said, Cry, and he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field;* The word which we translate *goodliness*, is *Chesed*, *All flesh is grass* (man withers quickly) and *Chesed*, *the goodliness thereof*, all of man, his favour, beauty, strength, all these are as the *flower of the field*. Some read *goodness* for *goodliness*; the sense holds, if we take it so: the naturall, the morall goodness of a man is but a flower. As no goodliness, so no goodness of man, except spiritual, lasteth long, and that lasteth long and long, even for ever: Grace is not as the flower of the field, that is, durable substance: that (as the Prophet speaks there of the word of God in v. 8.) shall stand for ever. The grace of God is as lasting as the word of God, for his word is the externall seed or principle of grace. But all other goodness and goodliness of man, how good, how goodly soever, his other beauty, how beautifull soever, his strength, how strong, his favour, how well favoured soever, is but as the flower of the field, which is either cut down while it is green, or soon fades while it stands.

Take favour in this sense, and the sense of the whole verse is harmonious and sound. *Thou hast granted me life*; my body is formed and quickned, and more then so, *Thou hast given me favour*, my body is full of beauty and comeliness. The comeliness of the body is a favour received, and many receive favour, because they are comely. From either of which considerations we may call

call the comeliness of the body *favour*, and it is no common favour, God denies this to many; he grants them the life of nature, but not favour, yea, he grants many the life of grace, but not favour: *Beautiful souls are often ill-housed; and filthy souls clearly housed*; 'tis admirable when both beauties meet in the same man; *Moses* was a goodly childe (Exod. 2. 2.) and a good man. As grace in the inward man is the best favour, so favour is graceful to the outward man.

Thou hast granted me life and favour,

And thy visitation hath preserved my spirit:

Here is the third benefit to this Royall grant, the visitation of God. One reads, *Thy presence*. A second, *Thy assistance*: A third, *Thy inspection*, thy over-looking or superintendency hath preserved my spirit: The Hebrew word signifies, The visitation of a superiour over an inferiour, as when masters inquire into their families, or governors into their Colledges and Hospitals, to see whether the statutes and orders appointed by the founders and benefactors be observed. There is a three-fold visitation of God held forth in Scripture.

תפס
Inspectio.
וְיִשְׁכַּח
מַעַר. Sept.

Visitatio est
Dominorum &
superiorum,
cum ad Deum
refertur, deno-
tat providenti-
am. Pined.

1. A visitation of condemnation. God visits to take vengeance by destructive punishments, when warning is not taken, nor repentance shewed after corrective punishments. *Shall not I visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 9.

2. A visitation of correction (Psal. 89. 32.) *If thy children forsake my Law, &c. then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, &c.* Though they break my laws, yet I will not break Covenant, they shall smart for it, but they shall not perish for it. This is a fatherly visitation.

3. A visitation of consolation. And this two-fold. 1. For deliverance out of an evil estate, and that either temporall, the Lord is said to visit his people *Israel*, when he delivered them out of Egypt (Exod. 4. 31.) or spiritual and eternal, *God hath visited and redeemed his people*, saith the blessed Virgin (Luk. 1. 68.) that is, he hath visited his people, to redeem them from sin and Satan, death and hell, by Jesus Christ.

Secondly (Which is more proper to this text) there is a visitation, for protecting in a good estate. When God (having cau-
sed

fed our line to fall in a fair place) draws his line of providentiall communication round about us, so M. Broughton translates, *Life and loving kindness hast thou dealt to me, and thy providence preserveth my spirit.* As if Job had said, *Thou dedst not only give me life and favour, but thou d. dst protect me for many years in the enjoyment of favours.* Providence was the hedge, not only of his outward, but of his inward estate, *Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*

שמר

Summa felicitas
aig; diligentia
prospexit, ca-
vit, observavit,
ut saltem custo-
dia et excubia
nocturne, vel
gregum custo-
des.

The Verb which we translate, *bath preserved*, signifieth to preserve, both by strength and watchfulness. The Noun expresseth a *Watch-tower* in Hebrew, because a watch-man standeth upon his Tower, and looks round about him, to espy and give notice of approaching dangers. The Lord preserveth both wayes, by his watchfulness, and by his strength: his eye is wakefull enough, and his arm is powerfull enough to preserve us. *He that keepeth Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep* (Ps. 121. 1.) *the Creatour of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary* (Isa. 40. 28.) He that is thus wakefull, can easily visit, and he that is thus powerfull, can easily preserve those whom he visiteth.

T by visitation hath preserved my spirit.

Or But how did the visitation of God preserve the *spirit* of Job? what are we to understand by his spirit, which was thus preserved?

The spirit of a man is taken three wayes;

First, For *life*. Thus God keepeth us from death, while he preserves our spirits.

Secondly, For the *soul*. Thus God preserveth our spirits, while he keeps us from falling into, or from falling in temptation; while he keeps our corruptions from prevailing and our graces from decaying.

Thirdly, The spirit of man is taken for his courage. Thus God preserveth our spirits, while he keeps us from needless fears, and cowardly despondencies. Doubtless Job had experience of the visitation of God preserving his spirit in all these senses, yet here he seems chiefly to intend the preservation of his life, which God had granted him with favour, or of these comforts which were granted him with his life.

Hence observe. First in generall,

That what God granteth, he preserveth.

It is a part of his grant, that he will preserve. Should the Lord bestow the greatest stock of mercy upon us, and leave us to the wide world, we should quickly loose all; God is not like the Carpenter or the Mason, who buildeth up a house, and then leaveth it to it self, or to the care of others. The Lord surveys what he builds, and keeps up what he sets up; all would come down else. Providence succeedeth Creation, or Providence is a continued Creation. As soon as ever the Lord had made man, and a garden, he took the man and put him into the Garden, which he had made, *to dress it and to keep it* (Gen. 2. 15.) God putteth the creatures under mans charge, yet he keepeth all creatures in his own charge, and especially man: A Garden without a man to visit it would soon be a wilderness. And man without God to visit him, would soon be, or be in a wilderness, either out of order, or in danger. Achish promiseth David, *I will make thee the keeper of my head for ever* (1 Sam. 28. 2.) His meaning was, he should be *Captain of his guard*. Great Princes have their guards, they have keepers of their heads. The great King of heaven and earth is a guard to the meanest man, and the keeper of his head. God enquires of Cain for his brother Abel (Gen. 4.) *Where is Abel thy brother?* What is become of him? Cain was angry at the question, *Am I,* (saith he) *my brothers keeper?* We ought to be one anothers keepers; our mutual visitations should preserve one anothers spirits. Some are apt to think themselves too good for the work: others that the work is too hard for them. It is our comfort, and it may be our assurance, that God hath neither of these thoughts, *The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The Sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the Moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul: The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and for evermore* (Psalm. 121. 5.) How large a writ or patent of protection is granted here? No time shall be hurtfull, neither *day nor night*; which includes all times. Nothing shall hurt, neither Sun nor Moon, nor heat nor cold. These include all annoyances Nothing shall be hurt, *Thy soul shall be preserved, thy out-goings and thy comings in shall be preserved.* These include the whole person of man, and him in all his just affairs and actions. Nothing of man is safe without a guard, and nothing of man can be unsafe, which is thus guarded. They shall be kept, who can say, *The Lord is our keeper.* And they cannot

*Præfectorum
ejus accipiat
aliter, id est,
omnia quæ in
ejus cura sunt
potestate ha-
beret.*

be kept, no not by legions of Angels, who have not the Lord for their keeper. None can keep us, but he, and he hath promised to keep us *for evermore*. Some men are weary of their offices, and some are put out of office; God is neither. In that Prophetical curse against Judas, tis said, *Let another take his office* (Ps. 109. 8.) What office? It is this word, and notes there the office of looking to, or of preserving the souls of others, we commonly call it, *The cure of souls*. Such is the office of all the Ministers of Christ, That's *Episcopacy by Divine right*; this in the text is *divine Episcopacy*. That word which here in *Job* we translate *visitation*, and in the Psalm now cited, *office* is called *Episcopacy* by the Apostle (Act. 1. 21.) Christ is the great Bishop or visitour both of our souls and bodies. He is the œcumenical Bishop. The whole world is his Diocess, He preserveth man and beast. See more of this point, Chapter, 7. 20.

Again, For as much as this visitation which extendeth to the whole man, is here in the letter determined upon the Spirit. We may observe,

First, Taking spirit for life,

That as our well-being, so our being in the world is at the daily dispose of God.

The living God not only giveth, but maintaineth our lives. We live not by bread, while we are healthy, nor by medicines, when we are sick; but by the word of God. His visitation doth all.

Secondly, Take spirit for the soul, then we are taught,

That our souls are not independently immortal or incorruptible.

As the life of the whole man is not, so neither is the life of the soul, of, or in it self, without support from God. The Angelical spirits who were never married to bodies of earth, stand not meerly by Creation, but by Providence. The visitation of God preserveth those spirits, how much more the spirits of men, which are espoused to dust and clay.

Thirdly, As spirit signifieth the soul, not only in its naturall but in its spiritual state, or in the state of grace, We learn,

That our spiritual stock and treasure are in danger, and would decay, if the power and care of God did not preserve our spirits.

Grace cannot keep it self, if left to its self. We should loose, not only degrees of grace, but all grace, were it left in our own hands,

hands: But because it is grace, therefore it is not left in our own hands, and because grace is not left in our own hands, therefore it cannot be lost. So the Apostle clearly (1 Pet. 1. 4.) *We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* The word signifies to keep, as a City beleaguered without by a strong enemy, is kept by a Garison. Man had at the first an excellent estate in spirituals. though it cannot be said (properly) that he had grace (for that is in the hand of a Mediator) yet he had the image of God and perfect innocency, but because God did not visit his spirit by fresh assistances, he was stripped of all, and fell from the throne of his created glory. As God visits our souls by preventing grace, to give us what we had not: so he visits us by his preserving and persevering grace, to continue what he hath given.

Lastly, Forasmuch as (though God createth and careth for the whole man, yet) the visitation of God is expressed only, as to the spirit. We may observe,

That God doth chiefly take care of, and provide for the spirit or soul of man.

When God formed the body of man at first, out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, it is not said he became a living body, or a living man, But, *man became a living soul.* So here, the work of providence is not enlarged to the whole man, but restrained to his spirit; as if the Lord did scarce think our bodies either worth, or needing a visit in comparison of our spirits. And seeing God cares for nothing in us, so much as for our spirits, should not our care be chiefly for our spirits? The soul is (upon the matter) all man, ought not man to be most of all for his soul? Shall the thoughts of God be most busied, his care and inspection most fixed upon our spirits, and shall not ours? While Christ in a manner dischargeth us of our outward man (Mat. 6. 25.) *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on;* His meaning was, to charge us more deeply with the inward man; yet how many are there, whose outward man stands them in more cost and care, in more thoughts and visitations for one day, then their spirits or inward man doth for a whole year, yea, for their whole lives! Visitations are frequent and serious for the preserving of the body: but where shall we finde serious thoughts of visiting the soul?

Take this word further, *If it be the visitation of God which pre-*

serveth our spirits, we should often visit God with prayer, intreating him to continue these visitations. Prayer is our visiting God, as providence is Gods visiting of us, and we should visit God by prayer, not only (as they, Isa 26.) in trouble, but in our peace: we should desire him to visit our estates, our families, but especially our souls and spirits in their most flourishing condition. The Apostle useth it as an argument to keep us from distracting thoughts (Phil. 4. 2.) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand, be carefull in nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your request be made known unto God, The Lord is at hand let not your hearts be troubled. Visit God in duty who is at hand to visit you in mercy. Though there be an infinite distance between God and man, yet God is not far from any man, and he is ever near some men. Let not us be strangers to God, when we hear he maketh continual visits to us. Thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.

Verse 13. *And these things hast thou bid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee.*

Some read the first clause (which adds sharpness to it) with an interrogation. *And hast thou bid these things in thine heart?* is it so with thee, or hast thou dealt so with me indeed?

The heart of God, is the will, purpose or decree of God: These are a vast repository, wherein all things are laid up.

And these things hast thou bid, &c.

What things? what is the antecedent to these things?

1. Some say, His afflictions, *These things*, that is, these afflictions, which thou hast now laid upon me, were hid in thine heart: thou hast shewed me many favours, while in secret thou didst prepare rods for me.

2. The antecedent to *these things* is mercy, *life, favour and visitation*, spoken of before, say others; as if Job had spoken thus: *This bill of blessing now read, these priviledges now reckoned up, were hidden in thine heart: thou hast had gracious intentions towards me, while thou hast been smiting me.*

I know all this is with thee.

Scio quia universorum meorum Vultus

That is, Thou remembrest all this, and keepest a record of it thee. The Vulgar makes this the text, *I know thou remembrest all things, or all men.* Some

Some (supposing the antecedent to be his afflictions) make out this harsh and unbecoming sense, as if Job had thus uttered his mind to God, *I now perceive thou hast had coles of anger raked up in the ashes, while those warm beams of love did shine upon me. Thou hast held out mercy in thine hand, but somewhat else lay in thine heart.* This interpretation in the common understanding of it, is most unworthy of God. It is the wickedness of men to speak fair, and do some courtesies, while cruelty and revenges are hid in their hearts. When Esau (Gen. 27. 41.) saw himself defeated of the blessing by his brother, *He said in his heart, The dayes of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob:* Here's the character of malice, he gave neither brother nor mother ill language, but *he said in his heart.* The holy God never speaks good to them, to whom he intends evil. The Creatour needs not daub or prevaricate with his creatures.

Quosihæc malivolus in animo recondita in tempus opportunum asservasset ut nec opinantem opprimeret Atrox querimonis. M. cri.

I grant indeed that the Lord giveth many wicked men outward favours, and speaks them fair in his works, but he never speaks them fair in his Word, *Say, We to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him* (Isa. 3. 11.) Men are apt to flatter, but flattery is much an abomination to the Lord, as it is below him.

I grant also, That the Lord giveth his own people many favours, and speaketh real kindneses to them, while he hides affliction in his heart. What evil soever he brings upon them, he hath thoughts to do them good, and hath nothing but good for them in his thoughts.

We understand by those *hidden things*, the mercies which Job with his last breath had enumerated: then the words import two things:

First, An argument to move the Lord not to destroy him, or to assure his own heart that he would not. As if he had said, Lord, I know thou remembrest well, what thou hast done for me, what cost thou hast been at in making me at first, and in preserving me hitherto; surely then thou wilt not pull all down in a moment.

Secondly. The words may import that the Lord in afflicting Job had used only a kinde of sacred dissimulation. A dissembler carrieth himself, as if he had no intent to do what he is resolved to do; it is usual with men thus to dissemble hatred, and so have some

some their love. He that purposeth much good to another, hideth it sometimes under fowr language and unkindest usuage. Joseph had most endeared affection toward his brethren, yet he put a disguise of anger upon it, acting the part of a severe man, who lyeth at catch to finde out advantages and pick quarrels. Joseph used many stratagems of love, to entangle his brethren, and wrapt up his good will, in hard speeches, and rough carriages: Nothing appearing less then what indeed he most was, *A loving brother forgetfull of nothing but injuries*; Job seems to have had such a conception of God, while he saith, *These things hast thou hid in thine heart*; and then his sense riseth thus, *Lord, I know thou bearest favour and goodwill towards me still. The fire of thy love is not extinct, but covered. Thou dost but personate an enemy, thou art my friend: thou drawest a cloud betwixt me and the light of thy countenance, but thy countenance is still as full of light towards me as ever, and though I see nothing but sorrows on every side, yet I know mercies are hid in thine heart.* Thus the words are an assertion of Job's faith and assurance, that God loved him, while his chastenings lay most heavy upon him. Hence observe, First,

That the Saints while they are strong in faith, are able to discern the favour of God through the clouds and coverings of his most angry dispensations.

This they can do, and when they can, they are arrived at a great height in grace. To maintain our interest in Christ through disadvantages, is strong faith. The woman of Canaan (Mat. 15. 26.) knew her pardon and acceptance were hid in the heart of Christ, while he called her dog, and would scarce vouchsafe to cast an eye upon her. Faith did this, and faith can do the like at this day. But every true faith will not do it. There is a kinde of miracle wrought in such beleiving: So Christ concludes with that woman (v. 28.) *O woman, great is thy faith.* Truth of grace is not enough for every work of grace: Some works will not be done without strength, as well as truth. Weak faith is ready to say, Mercy is lost, when it is but hidden, and that God means us no good, when we do not enjoy good. But the strong faith speaketh on this wise; *Lord, I know there is mercy in thine heart towards me, though I see nothing in thy face but frowns, and feel nothing from thy hand but blows. Let God do what he pleaseth with me, I will not have a jealous thought of him, or suspect his intentions towards*

me, whatsoever his actions be. Secondly, observe,

We may gather arguments of support in our greatest sufferings from the apprehension of concealed mercies.

The skill and holy subtilty of faith can winde it self in Gods bosome, and from what it findes lying secretly there for us, encourages us to bear what is openly laid upon us.

Lastly, Observe, *A beleiver looks upon all his receives, as coming out of the heart of God.*

As he can look into his own heart, and see all the Commandments and revealed counsels of God hidden there, so he can look into the heart of God, and see all the comforts he wanteth hidden there. Men of the world, take their comforts only from the hand of God; Saints take theirs from the heart of God. It putteth the price upon every blessing, when we can look upon speciall love, as the spring of it. Look how much of the heart of our friend we can see in a courtesie, so much true value there is in it. Hence it is usual with man, when he would expresse his freeness to those who desire a favour at his hands, to say, *Yes, Take it with heart and good will, you have it with all my heart*: We read of one, who complained he had received but a golden cup, when he saw another receive a kisse from a noble Prince. A kisse is a better gift then a cup of Gold. Love is the richest present. How happy then are they, who have the golden cup, and a kisse too? much from the hand, and all from the heart, from the love of God.

Job having thus revised and read over the particular of his former mercies received from the bounty and free love of God, revives his complaint about, and renews his desire of deliverance from present sorrows in his next address to God.

J O B, Chap. 10. Vers. 14, 15, 16, 17.

If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

If I be wicked, wo unto me; if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head: I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction.

For it encreaseth; thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon, and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.

Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and encreasest thine indignation upon me: changes and war are against me.

THe connection of these words lyeth somewhat in the dark, and this inevidence hath caused divers conjectures about it.

1. Some make the connection with the 13. verse, *I know* (said Job) *that this is with thee*; and here he declareth what was with him, namely, that, *If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

2. The connection is made by others with the 12. verse, *Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit, yet if I sin thou markest me, &c.* As if Job had said, *Though thou hast been pleased to make so many grants of favour, and hast done all those things for me, which were hidden in thine heart, yet I know thou wilt not bear with, or connive at me, If I sin against thee: Thou hast not given me those mercies, that I should be imboldened to transgress the rule of thy justice; no, though thou hast done much for me, Yet if I sin, thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

3. A third goeth higher, and makes these words depend upon the third verse, where Job puts three queries to God; the last of which is, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* I know it is not, for 'tis like I might escape as well as another, yet, *(if I sin, thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity; If I be wicked, wo unto me.* Mine own experience proves thee far enough from shining upon the counsel of the wicked. Behold, clouds and darkness are upon me.

There

There is a fair sense in any of these connections ; which to determine is not easie ; I shall leave all three before the Reader.

Vers. 14. *If I sin, then thou markest me.*

If I sin.

Sin standeth here in opposition to wickedness ; *Thou wilt not shine upon the counsel of the wicked.* And, verse 15. *If I be wicked, then woe unto me, for if I sin then thou markest me.* Sin is any transgression against, or deviation (though but an hairs breadth) from the rule, if I fail be it never so little.

Then thou markest me.

The Original hath four significations, which occasion as many different interpretations of the Text:

First, To preserve, and that two wayes ; first, by protecting from those evils which others would bring upon us (Psal. 141.9.) *Keep me from the snare which they have laid.* That is, Protect me from the danger which their snares threaten me with. So at the 12th verse of this Chapter, *Thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.* Secondly, It is rendred to preserve by sparing, or not bringing those evils upon us, which our sins have deserved. So the Vulgar here, who to make out his sense, puts the latter into the form of an interrogation, *If I have sinned, and thou hast spared me for a time, Wherefore then dost thou not acquit me from mine iniquity ?* As if the meaning of Job were this. When in former times I sinned against thee, thou wast pleased to remit of thy severity, and deal gently with me, *Thou didst spare me, as a father spareth a son that serveth him.* Why is the tenour of thy dispensations so much changed from what it was, seeing thou art a God that changeest not, and I am but what I was, a weak and changeable man ? Why am I not charged with sin, and not set free as sometimes (I have been) from sorrow, the fruit of it ? Wilt thou deal with me, who sin out of infirmity, or against my will, as with those who are wicked, and have a will to sin ?

Si peccavi es
ad horam pa-
percisti mihi,
&c. Vulg.

Secondly, To prevent others from doing what they desire, or our selves from what they fear (Psal. 18.23.) *I was upright before him, and I kept my self from mine iniquity ;* As if he had said, I have maintained such a strict watch over my own heart, that I

Z z Z

have

have prevented my self from falling into that sin which I was most subject to, and in danger of, both in regard of my constitution and temptation. Taking this meaning of the word, the whole verse is rendred thus, *If, or, when I am ready to sin, thou (stoppest, or) preventest me, Why then dost thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* As if he had said, Lord, wilt thou deal with me, as with a wicked man? Thou knowest that I am not wicked, for by thy preventing grace, thou hast kept me from all wickedness, and stopt me from many sins.

Whence note,

That the remembrance of the power of God in keeping us pure from greater sins, is an argument that he will spare us, though we have (through infirmity) fallen into sin.

He that holds us from iniquity, will not destroy us for iniquity. Some are stopt from sin, and storm when they are stopt; these have no reason to think, God will spare them, because he hath stopt them. Thousands are stopt from sin, who neither know what it is to sin, nor that they have been stopt from sin. These cannot plead this point: As it is no vertue to endure what is not grievous to us: so no grace not to do what is not joyous to us, when we do it. But to know we are stopt from a pleasing sin, and rejoyce at it, to see how our corruptions have been prevented, and to bless God for it; this is a great degree of grace. As there is a preventing grace, which beginneth with us, while we are strangers from God, and are walking on in the wayes of sin; so there is a preventing grace, watching over us after we are turned to God, lest we fall into sin. Experience of this may be a sweet support unto the soul under the saddest afflictions, and in the darkest night of spiritual desertions.

Thirdly, The word signifieth to keep in prison, or in safe custody. The Noun is a prison in Hebrew. And thus the sense is given three wayes, as an Assertion, as an Interrogation, as an Imprecation. First, as an Assertion, *If I have sinned, thou wilt, or thou mayest imprison me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Whence note,

That the best and dearest of Gods servants may look for straits, if they walk loosely.

The Lord will shut them up, if they presume and take undue liberty, or grow licentious. They shall be either humbled or destroyed, who turn the grace of God (that is, the manifestation of

לִּי לִלְבָּאִי
לִלְבָּאִי
Ejulat deducit. Rab. A.
Mos. Kimchi.

of his grace, either by his word or by his works) into wantonness. God will not cocker his own children; and dandle them so, as to forget to correct them, if they forget him and their own duty. If *Israel* sin, *Israel* shall smart for it; and if *Job* sin, *Job* must look to be laid in prison for it. Thus he speaks acquitting God from shining upon the counsels of Wicked men, seeing he will not spare, no not his own children, if they sin against him.

Secondly, The sense is given by an Interrogation, *If I sin, Wilt thou therefore shut me up in prison? Wilt thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* And so he pleadeth with God, as using too much severity and harshness against him, *What, shall I be laid by the heels for every fault? Shall I be arrested and clapt up in irons for every sin? Wilt thou imprison me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity?* They who are most wicked, deserve no worse then this, and shall I, if I do but sin, receive such measure? Where are thy compassions, and the sounding of thy bowels? are they restrained? It should seem so, else thou wouldest not thus restrain and imprison me.

Thirdly, As an imprecation, *If I have sinned, according as I am charged, imprison me as long as thou wilt, and do not acquit me from mine iniquity:* if I am such a man as my friends judge me to be, I expect no favour; let me be poor and sick still, torture me, rack me, do what thou wilt with me. Like that of *David*, *Psal.* 7. 4, 5. *If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, Sec. Let the enemy persecute my soul and take it, yea let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust. I ask no favour, if I am such a man as mine enemies have represented me: or if I have done that for which they challenge me.*

Fourthly, To observe and mark, it importeth a critical, a curious observation; to mark exactly, (*Psal.* 130. 3.) *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, who shall stand?* But doth not the Lord mark iniquity? Doth not he take notice of every sin acted by any of the children of men, especially by his own children? Why then doth the Psalmist put it upon an *If*? If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity. 'Tis true, the Lord marks all iniquity to know it, but he doth not mark any iniquity in his children to condemn them for it. So the meaning of the Psalm is, *That if the Lord should mark sin, with a strict and severe eye, as a Judge to charge it upon the person sinning, no man could bear it.* Master

Valde durum videtur, ut si quid peccaverim perpetuum me in carcere custodias; or, Dissima detineas, nequam peccati penas remittere velis.

Pined.

An simulac peccato observas me, &c. Jun.

Verbo jurantis & contestantis suam innocentiam, si peccavi imprecor mihi durissimam custodiam. Bold.

Refertur ad
exquisitiam
Dei observa-
tionem univer-
sarum humane
vitæ actionum.
Rob. Abrah.
Tygur. Reg.
70.
Observas me
ne unquam
lateant pecca-
ta. August.
Quoties pecca-
vi id diligen-
tissime no-
tasti. Merc.

Broughton translates, *when I sin, thou dost watch me*; watching is more then marking; as if the Lord had taken up a stand upon a high place, and did there compose himself to see what's done; or to make annotations upon the whole text of mens lives all the world over.

Whence observe,

That God takes notice of the sins and failings of his own people.

If I sin, then thou markest me; and in the 14th Chapter, verse 16. *Thou numbrest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sin?* Thou numbrest my steps, What steps? He meaneth not the steps of his outward, but of his inward man: or the steps of his outward man in order to the inward. There is a morall walking, *Walk before me and be upright*: walking is conversing or acting: so, *Thou numbrest my steps*, thou tellest my morall motions, the actings of my soul and body, what I do, and what I think, *Dost thou not watch over my sin?* And again (Chap. 31. 4.) *Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?* That is, how my conversation is ordered, both toward himself, and toward my neighbour? Thus the Lord counteth all our steps, we cannot step aside or tread awry, but he observes us. There are two that keep a record of our lives.

First, God he followeth us up and down, as with pen, ink, and paper to write our actings.

Secondly, Our own consciences (which are as God within us) keep a record too, they write our lives, and count our steps. Many cannot read the book of Conscience, and so know little that is in it: But a time will come (if Conscience, be not purged by the blood of Christ) when they shall perfectly read all their sins in the book of Conscience. And if conscience, which is Gods deputy, then, much more God, who is the Judge of conscience marketh us if we sin. God needs not judge upon information, but upon his own observation. He will reprove every man whom he doth not pardon: and is able to set before us in order, whatsoever any of us have done. How then do some say, *That God sees not sin in his children?* Job saith, that God marked his sin; but according to this doctrine, he should rather have said, *If I sin, thou dost not mark me*. Some through ignorance sin and see it not, sin and perceive it not; but no man (among all the multitudes of men) can sin unseen, or unperceived by God, *If I sin, then thou markest me.*

And

And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

לֹא תִקְנֵנִי

Non purgas me
ut sim immunis
ab omni peccato.

Will not the Lord acquit? why have we a Gospel then? what's the business of mercy? and where's the efficacy of Christs blood? Doth not this purchase, and do not they offer acquittances from iniquity? The words are interpreted three wayes.

First, That *Job* speaks from his unbelief, as if he could not pardon through the thick cloud of his troubles, or have any evidence, that God hath mercy in store for him, while he endured such plenty of miseries.

Secondly, that he speaks thus, upon a supposition of inpenitency; as if he had said, if I sin and humble not my self, thou wilt not acquit me.

Thirdly, That by *iniquity* he means his affliction, putting the cause for the effect: So, *Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity*, is, thou wilt not take away these afflictions, which are counted as the proceed or issue of mine iniquity.

Hence observe,

First, *Sin is a debt.*

Every acquittance supposeth an obligation. All men, as creatures, are in a debt of duty to God, and when they fail in that, they are in a debt of penalty, as sinners.

Observe, secondly,

When sin is pardoned, the sinner is acquitted, his debt is taken off, and his bonds are cancelled.

Pardon is our discharge, our *quietus est*, sealed in the blood of Christ. All process at law, or from the law, is then prohibited: there's no more to be said, or done against us.

Again, The word signifies to cleanse and purge, as well as to acquit; Note from it,

That as sin defileth the soul, so pardon cleanseth it.

Purge me with byssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter then snow, was Davids prayer for pardon after his great defilement, *Psal. 51. 7.* If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, *1 John 1. 9.*

Fourthly, Forasmuch as *Job* groaning under burdens of sorrow speaks so often about the pardon of sin, we learn,

That while sin remaineth (to our sense) unpardoned, the soul

soul seeth no way to get out of sorrows.

The removing of affliction is a sign that sin is forgiven, and the sense of our forgiveness, is an argument that affliction shall be removed.

Fifthly, taking the former words in conjunction with these, *If I sin* (knowingly and wickedly, as they charge me) *Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Observe,

That a persisting sinner, is an unpardoned sinner.

There is abundant mercy for returning sinners, but I know of none for those that resolve to go on in sin. There is a promise of repentance, and a promise to repentance, but there is no promise which doth not either offer or require repentance, *Repent and thou shalt be saved* is the tenour of the Gospel, as well as *believe and thou shalt be saved.* Though many who are going on in their sins, are overtaken by grace, yet there is no grace promised to those who go on in their sins. The holiest are threatned with wrath if they do; surely then, none are put into an expectation of mercy, if they do. The promises either finde us repenting, or they cause us to repent. No sinner is pardoned for repentance, or without it. *Job* speaks that language more clearly in the words following, which some make an exposition of these.

Verse 15. *If I be wicked, woe unto me.*

If I be wicked.

What it is to be wicked, hath been shewed, and the difference between a wicked man and a sinner discovered, at the 7th verse, upon those words, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

Woe unto me.

The word is derived (saith one of the Rabbins) from a root signifying to *howl*: Great mourning is a kinde of howling; and they who are in woe, are bid to howl (*Isa. 13. 6. Chap. 23. 1, &c.*) Wicked men howl rather than pray in their distress, because of their extream worldly woe, *They have not cryed unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds,* *Hos. 7. 4.*

There are legal woes, and there are evangelical woes. The Law cries woe, and so doth the Gospel: Gospel woes are the worser of the two; for if the Law say woe to us, the Gospel may say mercy to us; but if the Gospel say, woe to us (as it doth to hypocrites, who abuse, and to unbelievers, who refuse mercy)

mercy) where shall we have mercy? All woes may be understood in this place, Law-woes and Gospel woes, temporall woes and eternall woes, *if I be wicked then woe unto me.* Hence observe,

Woe is the portion of wicked men.

Though they laugh, yet woe is their portion, yea they are therefore threatned with woe, because they laugh (*Luk. 6. 25.*) *Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep.* Some wicked men are as merry, as if mercy were their peculiar. But we may say to their mirth, what doth it? Or if we should ask them, What they do to make themselves so merry: *David will resolve us what their course is (Psal. 36. 2.) The wicked flattereth himself in his own eyes, untill his iniquity be found to be hateful.* He that would be flattered, shall never want a flatterer, for if none will do it, he will do it himself. He speaks well of himself. and therefore he thinks all's well. But usually he hath some others ready enough to speak well of him too. The true Prophets complained of the false for crying, *peace, peace, when there was no peace,* for saying all is well, when they should say, all is woe. But though wicked men flatter themselves, and though they get their neighbours to flatter them, yea though the Ministers flatter them, yet God will not flatter them; and at last their own Consciences will not flatter them neither. Conscience will preach them a Sermon of woes at last, though possibly it hath been silent through ignorance, or silenced through malice for a long time.

As all the promises of grace and mercy hang over the heads of the godly and sincere; which way soever they go, a cloud of blessings drops and distils upon them: So clouds of wrath, and blood hang over the heads of wicked men, dropping upon them, yea dropping upon them when they suppose the Sun shineth upon them.

Secondly consider who speaks this; *If I (saith Job) be wicked, then woe unto me.*

Hence observe, That

A godly man may put the worst cases to himself.

The Scripture puts such cases to godly men, therefore they may put such to themselves (*Rom. 8. 13.*) *If ye live after the flesh ye shall dye,* saith the Apostle, writing to the Saints. Though such a supposition cannot be resolved into this position, *A godly man shall*

shall dye, yet the supposition is true, if he liveth after the flesh he shall dye. So the Apostle of himself, and his fellow-Apostles, yea of the Angels. *If we or an Angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you then that which we have preached, let him be accursed* (Gal. 1. 9.) And as Paul prophesied a curse upon any, either Apostle or Angel, who should preach a false Gospel, so a woe upon himself, if he should neglect to preach the true Gospel, 1 Cor. 9, 16. They who are above all curses, may be threatned with a curse. And they who shall certainly be preserved from doing that which inevitably brings the curse, may be told of a curse in case they should do it.

They put dangerous suppositions opposite to these, who say, *Let a godly man be never so wicked, yet it shall be well with him; let him sin as much as he will, yet it shall be well with him.* The Spirit of God never puts such suppositions, As the Scripture speaks often to perswade, so sometimes to terrifie the godly from sin, but never a title which may be an encouragement to sin. It speaks much to keep up their hearts in an assurance of pardon, in case they fall into sin, and much more to keep down their corruptions, and to preserve them from falling into sin. Though there be a truth in it, that how much soever a godly man sinneth, he shall be pardoned; yet the Scripture useth no such language, and the form of wholsom words teacheth every man rather to speak thus, *If I be wicked, then woe unto me,*

If I be righteous yet will I not lift up my head.

These words stand in an elegant opposition against the former. Here are persons and states opposite: persons, *The wicked and the righteous, if I be wicked, if I be righteous.* States, *Woe, and lifting up of the head, if I be wicked, then woe unto me; if I be righteous then will I not lift up mine head.* He doth not say, if I be righteous I shall be happy, though that be a truth, but (which was more suitable to his purpose) *if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.*

Some put this into a dilemma, or double argument, by which Job would aggravate the greatness of his affliction; as if he had said, *Let me look which way I will, my case is very sad, if I be wicked then woe be to me; if I be wicked yet I am so full of sorrows, that I am not able to hold up my head; But I rather interpret this latter part of the verse, as a description of Jobs humility, in the best of his*

his spiritual estate then as any aggravation of the illness of his temporall estate.

If I be righteous.

He speaks not as if he doubted whether he were righteous or no. Job had shewed the settledness of his spirit in that assurance more then once before, but he puts the best of his case, to shew how low he was in his own thoughts, when he was at best. There is a two-fold righteousness; First, of Iustification. Secondly, of Sanctification, of sincerity or uprightness: and so his meaning is, Suppose I am such, as I have asserted my self to be, and as God himself hath testified to me to be, perfect and upright, yet I will not lift up my head; Some read, I cannot, others, I dare not lift up my head.

I will not lift up my head.

Not lift up thy head, *man*, if thou wert righteous? Why, who in the world shall lift up their heads, if the righteous shall not? Are there any that have such cause to lift up their heads as they? He might say indeed, if I were rich, or if I were honourable, yet I will not lift up my head, these are things which cannot, and therefore should not lift up any mans spirit an inch from the ground: but to say, if I were righteous, I would not lift up my head, seems a degradation or an abasement of righteousness. To clear this I shall open the phrase a little.

To lift up the head of another man, is to advance him. Thus Pharaoh lifted up the head of his chief Butler, Gen. 40. 13. And the King of Babylon lifted up the head of Jebojakin King of Judah, and brought him forth out of prison, Jer. 52. 21. In this sense David calls God, The lifter up of his head, Psal. 3. 3.

To lift up our own heads, is to prevail, and to get above pressing evils victoriously, Judg. 8. 28. Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more: that is, Gideon routed, and made so compleat a conquest over the Midianites, that they were totally broken, and could no more insult over Israel. The victory of Christ over all our spiritual enemies, is thus described, Psal. 110. 7. He shall drink of the brook in the way; that is, of the waters of affliction and sorrow, which either the wrath of God, or the rage of men gave him to drink, while he was in the way of perfecting the work of our redemption; and

A a a a

because

because he shall do this, *Therefore shall he lift up, his head, that is,* he shall prevail by his passion, and overcome by dying, yea, he shall overcome death by a triumphant resurrection.

*Attollere caput
notat gaudium
& fiduciam.
Coc.*

Again, There is a two-fold lifting up of the head; First, a lifting up of the head with joy and consolation (*Luk. 21. 28.*) Secondly, A lifting up of the head with pride and ostentation, *Psal. 83. 2.* *Loe thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lift up the head;* that is, they have proudly boasted and vaunted themselves. The latter is *Jobs* sense, *if I be righteous, I will not lift up my head in pride;* he might and he did lift up his head in joy, because he knew himself righteous.

Once more, there is a lifting up of our heads in our selves, and a lifting up of our heads in Christ. *Job* disclaims the former here, but he all along assumes the latter. We cannot lift up our heads too high in the thoughts of free grace, nor hang them down too low, in the thought of our own works.

*Non levabo
caput, h. e. de-
misso capite ac
mente coram te
ambulabo.*

Further, While *Job* saith, *I will not lift up my head,* he meaneth less then he speaketh. In Scripture there is sometimes less expressed then is intended, and sometimes more. That of the Apostle (*1 Cor. 15. 58.*) *Your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord,* rises in sense higher then expression, our labour in the Lord shall not only not be in vain, but abundantly advantageous. This of *Job*, *I will not lift up my head,* falls in sense below his expression, for his meaning is, I will abase my self before God, I will be so far from priding my self, or walking (as the daughters of *Jerusalem* are described by the Prophet, *Isaiah 3. 16.*) with a stretched forth neck, that I will rather hang down my head.

*Miseriet infelices
capite demisso, et in terram de jectis
ambulant.
Sanct.*

To hang or hold down the head, in Scripture noteth humbling and sorrow; when Christ bids his people lift up their heads with joy, because the time of their redemption was drawing nigh, it implied that their heads would hang down with sorrow, while that redemption was further off. The Jewish fasts are described (in part) by this posture of sorrow (*Isa. 58. 5.*) *Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bull-rush?* Times of fasting are times of mourning, and then (it seems) they used to hang down the head, as a sign of mourning.

Hence observe, *That a godly man, how upright and holy soever he is, walks humbly with God.*

The

The more holiness any soul hath, The more humility it hath. Humility is a great part of our holiness; much more then is it an argument of holiness. The Pharisee (*Luk. 18.*) who thought that he was righteous, lifted up his head full high, he would not lose an inch of his commendation, and therefore commends himself. He is his own reporter of what he had done, and who he was; but the poor Publican durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, his spirit hung down as well as his head, yet he was the righteous man, and went home justified rather than the other. It is the scope and design of the Gospel to make and keep us humble. God hath set up the way of saving us by faith, that he might take away boasting, and that no flesh might glory in his sight.

Secondly, If *Job* would not lift up his head, though righteous, what shall we judge of those, who lift up and carry their heads so high, though they are wicked? There is no reason any man should be proud of his goodness, what a madness then is it for wicked men to be proud of, or in their naughtiness!

Thirdly, Though *Job* was very thankfull for, and joyfull in, yet he durst not lift up his head, or be proud of the white robes and costly rayment of imputed righteousness. What then shall we say of them, who are proud of the dirty rags and filthy rayment of their own inherent righteousness? A godly man walketh tremblingly, lest he should offend, therefore he saith, if I am wicked *unto me*: and he walketh humbly when he doth not offend, therefore he saith, though I am righteous, yet I will not hold up my head. *Job* hath often breathed out the humility of his soul in former passages, therefore I shall not insist upon it here.

I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction.

I am full.

That is, my mind is full. The spirit hath a stomach, or a capacious vessel for the receiving either of good or evil, of joy or sorrow. *Job*'s spirit had received in, as much evil and sorrow as ever it could hold, and more then he could well digest.

I am full of confusion.

The word signifies shame and burning heat, because shame appeareth with a burning heat or blush in the face, which is also called confusion of face. Blushing puts the face into a flame. Some take confusion here for shame, rendering the text, I am

A a a a 2

Saturitas hæc respicit animæ ventriculum, qui tantæ eorumnarum copiam vis potuit concoquere.

Pined.

קלל א קלל

Quod est cremare, ignominie penam efficit pudorem qui est in corde et in vultu sicut ignis.

full

*Erubescens
vultus habens
flammantes.
Sanc.*

full of shame, or ignominy : which ignominy might arise two wayes ; either from that reproach which his friends cast upon him, while they branded him for a wicked man, and an hypocrite, *I am full of reproach* ; so full that I may justly be ashamed, yea confounded, if I were such as they describe me. Or from that reproach which his afflictions cast upon him. Poverty is no shame to a beggar, who was born poor, but poverty is a shame to a man who hath been rich, and lived in honour. The Original word holds this forth most properly, being opposed to that which signifies weightiness and honour, because honour is a weighty thing, as this signifies lightness and shame, because shame is a light thing, or a thing of nought.

Our Translatours rendering the word *confusion*, seem to intend somewhat else besides *shame*.

Confusion notes a disorder, and an uncomposedness of spirit. When a man knows not what to do, or whose counsel to follow. When a man cannot make up his thoughts, or bring them to any issue : When the mind is like a skain of ravel'd silk, which will neither winde nor draw, then we are in confusion. And this I conceive was it, which Job chiefly intends, when he saith, *I am full of confusion*.

Hence observe,

Great sorrows distract the minde, and bring a man to his wits end.

While we suffer much, we scarce know what to do. Trouble upon the sensitive part, troubles the understanding. Confusion upon our estates, makes a confusion in our mindes ; it is very hard to keep our spirits in order, while our houses and business are out of order : every affliction makes some confusion without us ; and it is exceeding rare if affliction make not much confusion within us. *I (saith Job) am full of confusion.*

See thou mine affliction.

Est imbecillitas, maxime quæ est a maiore visum suppressione, statum miserum succumbentis notat.

There is a two-fold sight of affliction ; First, By a bare intuition, discerning it. Secondly, By a gracious compassion, delivering us from it. The former sight God alwayes hath of all our afflictions, neither our sins, nor our sorrows can be hidden from him. The latter he sometimes suspends, and will not see, what he cannot but see. He will not see so as to relieve, what he cannot but see so as to observe. It is this second kinde of sight, which

Job

Job entreats and prayes for here, *See thou my affliction, that is, pity me in my affliction.*

The word which we render affliction noteth weakness, and casting down, or that weakness which ariseth from casting down, an oppressing affliction, which like some great weight lies heavy upon us.

There are different readings; some thus, *I am filled with affliction and see my sorrows.* The Chaldee thus, *I will satiate my self with shame, I will see my affliction.* Man seeth his affliction by feeling it. Sight which is the chief sense, is put for any sense. And so the meaning is, though I am righteous, yet I cannot hold up my head, or take any comfort because I am so full of confusion, and see so much affliction; As if he had said, *Can a man at the same time mourn and rejoyce? Can a man lift up his head, while he hath such a load upon his heart?*

Videt vexationem homo qui vexatur, videt Deus qui eam respicit et propitius est. Drus.

Hence observe,

They who see much affliction, can hardly take in any consolation.

Come to a godly man, under great outward or inward troubles; tell him of the love of God, of the pardon of sin, of an inheritance among the Saints in light, as his portion; you can hardly fasten any of these things upon him: sorrow within keeps comfort out. As till sin be cast out we cannot act holily: so till worldly sorrow, or the excess of godly sorrow be cast out, we cannot act joyfully. The Saints in a right posture of spirit, are joyous in all their tribulations; and Christ is able to make consolations abound, as tribulation doth abound; yet where there is abundance of tribulation, consolation is usually very scarce. Drops will hardly be received, where rivers are offered and poured forth.

Satis habeas ignominie et vide impotentiam meam. Coc.

Another reading of the words, representeth Job bespeaking God in prayer, mixed with complaining, *If I were righteous, yet cannot I lift up my head, be thou satisfied with confusion, and behold my affliction.* So M. Broughton. As if Job had said, *Let it be enough, Lord, let it now suffice, give me some ease that I may lift up my head, a little before I lay it down for altogether.* Thus David prayed (Ps. 39. 11, 12.) *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth, surely every man is vanity. O spare me that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more.* When Nehemiah was humbling himself, and confessing his sin, and the sin of that people, he concludes according to this i n-

terpreta

terpretation, (Chap. 9. 32.) Let not all the trouble seem little before thee that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, and on our Priests, and on all thy people; as if he had said, Lord, consider that now we have been greatly punished, though we have been punished less then our sins deserve. Thou mayst justly inflict more, but we are not able to endure more.

Thirdly, We read imperatively, *Therefore see thou mine affliction*: So his meaning is, Lord, take notice of my sad condition, I am full of trouble.

Hence observe,

Restius in imperativo, q d. vide Domine quo sim statum cognosces ita esse ut dico. Merc.

That when sorrows are come to a great height, it is time for us to pray, that God would cast a compassionate eye upon them.

When we are past the cure and help of man, we are fittest objects for God. When the pressures of the people of Israel were greatly encreased in Egypt; then the Lord himself saith, *I have seen, I have seen*, (Exod. 3. 7.) and when affliction is boy'd up to the height, then let us say, *See Lord, See Lord*. When the rage and blasphemy of Rabshakeh, both by speaking and writing, reached even unto heaven, Then Hezekiah went and spread the letter before the Lord (2 King. 19. 14.) As if he had said, Lord, do thou read this letter; Lord, bow down thine ear and hear, Lord, behold and see, we are full of confusion, See thou our affliction. And when the enemies of the Jews in Nehemiah's time fell to scoffing and jeering the work they had in hand, and them in the work, then that zealous Governour puts it unto God, *Hear, O our God, for we are despised*.

Secondly, Note, That when our afflictions are at the highest and greatest, then the Lord is able to master and subdue them.

I am full of confusion, see thou mine affliction; as if he had said, it is in vain for me to shew my diseases and my wounds to creatures, I know I am not past thy cure, though I come thus late; or thus, I have shewed my wounds and my diseases to the creatures, I have made my moan to men, but they cannot help. Now I bring them unto thee, O see my affliction. All our ruines may be under the hand of God, he hath bread and cloathing for us, he can be our healer, when none can either in heaven or earth.

Lastly, Observe,

When our afflictions are at the highest, then usually God comes to deliver.

When

When the waters of affliction swell over the banks and threaten a deluge, then God turns the stream; when our sores fester, and are ready to gangrene, then God applies his balsome. He seldom appears in a business which others can do, or undertakes that which is mans work. As in the sore travel of women in child-bearing, other helpers undertake it not, till (as they speak) it be past *womens work*; so God seldom meddles eminently (he acts alwayes concomitantly) till our deliverance is past *mans work*, that so the whole praise of the work may be his. When danger is upon the growing hand, then desire God to take deliverance in hand: Then pray, and pray earnestly, that God would see your afflictions when you perceive them to be encreasing afflictions. So it follows in the next verse. *See thou mine affliction.*

Vers. 16. *For it encreaseth. Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon, and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.*

This verse with the next, are an elegant and pathetical description of *Jobs* yet growing and prevailing sorrows: for having closed the 15th verse with an assertion and a petition, *I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction*, he presseth and pursueth both in these words, *For it encreaseth: Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon.*

For it encreaseth.

M. Broughton renders, *How it fleeth up!* The Hebrew word is taken sometimes in a good, and sometimes in an ill sense. In a good sense it signifies to be lifted up, or to be eminent in excellency. In an ill sense, it signifies to be lifted up, or exalted with pride. The word is applied also to things without life, and then it signifies to augment by addition or encrease.

The Vulgar takes it in that ill sense, as noting pride and high-mindedness, translating by the Noun, thus, *For pride thou dost catch me as a Lyon: or thou dost hunt me as a Lyon, because I am proud.* A Lyon is a stout creature, and may be an embleme of pride.

Another gives a sense near that. *When it listeth up itself, then thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon.* When what listeth up it self? when my head listeth up it self; he had said in the former verse, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head, for, if I do lift up my head in pride, then thou wilt hunt me as a fierce Lyon, I shall be sure*

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In bonum, elevatus, eminuit, in malum, intumuit, suberbit de inanimatis crevit, auctus fuit.

to smart for every proud thought and high imagination. Both these translations render the meaning of Job thus, *If I should plead my own righteousness and innocency before thee, as thinking therein to lift up my head, and so should wax confident in myself, I shall presently pay for it, for I perceive that thou art preparing thine instruments against me, as men do against fierce Lyons, and wild savage beasts, to hunt catch and destroy me.* Here is a truth in these, God doth resist the proud; if any head lifteth it self up against God, God can quickly lay such an head as low as the ground. But, in Hypothesi, or in Job's case, I cannot assent to it, as a truth saying this Text.

A third Translation puts it in by an Interrogation, *I am full of confusion, see thou mine affliction, Can it be lifted up?* That is, Can my head be lifted up, when I am so full of sorrow and confusion? whatsoever my righteousness is, I am not in case now to stand upon it, 'tis no time for me to talk great words; Can I lift up mine head when thou pressest me with such a weight of affliction? Great afflictions will keep down the greatest spirits, or break them down. Affliction will make the stoutest heart stoop, and the highest head to bow.

But take the word according to our reading, as it referreth to his afflictions; *it encreaseth*, that is, my affliction encreaseth, and so a double exposition is given.

First, As if Job had spoken his wish or desire, *I am* (said he before) *full of confusion, see thou mine affliction, O that mine affliction might encrease, and that I might be fuller of confusion! O that my troubles might be strenghtned upon me, and that I might be weak enough to see an end of my troubles, I am yet too strong for death, O that thou wouldest quickly dispatch me, more weight, deeper wounds, harder blows would be welcome.* As if here again Job had assumed and renewed that complaining desire mentioned (Chap. 6. 7, 8.) *O that I might have my request! and that God would grant the thing that I long for! (what was that?) Even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!* But I shall let this pass; Job hath spoken these wishes plainly and in the letter too often; I will not charge him with another from a questionable interpretation.

Rather take the words declaratively, not for a wish of greater future afflictions, but for a manifestation of the greatness of his present afflictions: so we express them, *I am full of confusion,*

See thou mine affliction, for it encreaseth. This is a clear and a fair sense: Job intending to describe his estate more fully, sheweth it still upon the encrease, waxing worse and worse, greater and greater. As if he had said, mine are a pile or heap of afflictions, and still more are piled, and heaped on.

There is an elegancy in it, as taking in the other sense, for pride or lifting up. See my affliction, it waxeth proud. For as the waves of the sea are called proud waves, when they swell and encrease: So an affliction encreasing and swelling may be called a proud affliction. Some afflictions like a great sea rise above us, and stand over us; or like a cruel master domineer and insult upon us. Job's afflictions were proud ones, they came upon him with a kinde of authority, as if they would lay him at their very feet. Hence observe,

*Effert sese af-
flictio mea Ele-
ganti autem fi-
gura dicit,
quod sese effe-
rat. Elationem
et superbiam
morbo et dolo-
ri tribuit, cum
totum hominem
prestat. Merc.*

They who have endured very great afflictions, may yet finde their afflictions greatning and encreasing.

He had said before, *I am full of confusion*, and yet here he saith, *my affliction encreaseth*. When we have as much as we think our backs can bear, yet (possibly) more weight may be laid on. When we hope our affliction is upon the declining hand, that those waters are at an ebbe, and the fire slackning, then they may flow higher, and the Furnace may be heated seven times hotter then before. The Lord threatneth obstinate and rebellious sinners (Levit. 26.) *I will punish you yet seven times more for your sins*: Though I have brought such calamities upon you, that ye have been ready to say, surely, now God hath done his worst, we are in as bad a case as we can be; no, saith the Lord (who hath infinite wisdom to finde out wayes of afflicting, as well as of shewing mercy) *I will punish you yet seven times more for your sins*; no man knowes how much more God can punish him; his judgements in the executing of them, as well as in the laying of them, are past finding out. We know not the beginning of them, neither do we know when they will end. Now as the Lord afflicteth some seven times more for the punishment of their sins, so others seven times more for the tryall of their graces: sufferings are sent in perfection, to make us more perfect thorow sufferings; afflictions swell with pride, to abate the swellings of our pride, or to shew how those swellings are abated into humility. God hath unsearchable riches and treasures of chastenings, as well as of wrath or of love. And as when we think we have received as

much mercy as God can give us, he can yet give us more, and make our mercies seven-fold greater to our apprehensions then before ; so also he can dispense himself in the matter of affliction.

For it encreaseth.

This encrease is set forth by an elegant similitude. Though similitudes prove nothing, yet they much illustrate what is already proved.

Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon.

Thou huntest me as the ramping Shakall : So Mr. Broughton. The word *Shakall*, signifies a fierce assaulting Lyon ; or, as we speak, a Lyon rampant. Some translate a *Lynx*, others a *Leopard*, spoken of in the fourth Chapter. We may take it in general for any fierce, cruel and savage beast, of the one kind or of the other.

Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon] For *Thou*, some render (*it*) referring to his affliction, *For it encreaseth, and it hunteth me* (my affliction hunteth me) *as a fierce Lyon*. Sorrows are compared to a fierce Lyon. Afflictions hunt and follow, they tear and destroy like a wild beast. *Like as a Lyon, or like the young Lyon roaring on his prey* (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa. 45.*) *When a multitude of shepherds is called out against him* (Christ is compared to such a Lion there) *will not be afraid of their voice, nor abase himself for the noise of them* : Such were the afflictions of distressed, despised Job, they braved him to his very face, and would not withdraw or turn away from him, notwithstanding all the out-cries and loud-est lamentations which he made against them.

Secondly, The comparison is laid between the Lyon and Job, *Thou huntest me as if I were a Lyon* : So divers of the Ancients, and the Septuagint understand it; *I am taken or caught like a Lyon* ; as if Job had said, Lord, *Thou usest me as a wild beast, thou huntest me as thou wouldest hunt a Lyon or a bear, thou settest nets and toils, thou makest snares and pits* (as Nimrods do in the hunting of Lyons, and other wild beasts) *thou dealest with me, as if there were no taking, no taming of me, but by severest and roughest wayes* : *thou dealest with me, as if in my prosperity I had been like a fierce Lyon, oppressing and preying upon the poor, or, as if in my affliction I had provoked thee to resolve, that thou wilt*

*Effert se dolor
vixit ut leo, ne
quaquam co-
dens. Merc.*

*Capior sicut leo
ad occisionem.
Tendis mihi &
expandis rete,
non secus ac ad
feram capien-
dam. Rab. Sal.
Quidam refe-
runt ad prioris
status felicita-
tem, nam su-
perbum et im-
periosum ani-
mal leo est re-
gis; potentia
symbolum.*

wilt never leave off to afflict me; till thou hast destroyed me. *Thou huntest me as a fierce Lyon, How are they hunted? Lyons are not usually hunted to be preserved, 'tis rare to hunt Lyons so, but because they are hurtfull and destroying creatures, therefore they are hunted that they may be destroyed, and do no more hurt; as if he had thus expressed himself, Thou, Lord seemest to adjudge me not only as an unusefull and unserviceable creature, but also as a dangerous and a noxious creature, as a naturall brut beast made to be taken and destroyed (2 Pet. 2. 12.) yet I cannot assent that Job (though under the darkness of a sore temptation) had such dark thoughts of God, as if he had no other end in afflicting him, but to make an end of him.*

I rather expound him in a third sense, that the comparison is made between God and the Lyon; *Thou, O God, like a Lyon, dost hunt me.* Consent of Scripture is clearest for this interpretation, which often represents God in afflicting his people under the notion of a Lyon, as will appear in the proof of the observation arising from it; which is,

That the Lord seemeth sometimes to put off all pity and compassion towards his people.

So the Church complains (Lam. 3. 10.) *He was unto me as a bear lying in wait, and as a Lyon in secret places.* God threatned by the Prophet Hosea (Chap. 5. 14.) *I will be unto Ephraim a Lyon, and as a young Lyon to the house of Judah, I, even I, will tear and go away. I will afflict them fiercely and terribly.* Again (Hos. 13. 7.) *I will be unto them as a Lyon, as a leopard by the will I observe them.* Hezekiah speaks the same language (Isa. 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lyon, so will he break all my bones.* As when man dealeth cruelly with his brother, he is a wolf to him, or a Lyon to him (Psal. 17. 12.) (Mans acting of beastly lusts, is all the metamorphosis or change of men into beasts, which Heathen Poets have so much fancied, or the holy Scriptures so often mentioned.) Now, I say, as man acting cruelly upon man, is called a Lyon, so also is God. When God would shew the abatements of his wrath, then he saith, *I am God, and not man,* (Hos. 11. 8, 9.) *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? &c.* Thus he debates, by and by he votes and resolves negatively, *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger: I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not man.* But when he would shew the highest workings of his wrath, then he denies to shew himself so much as man:

Thus old *Babylon* and *Chaldea* are terrified, *Isa. 47. 1. Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, &c. Why so? Babylon had set so long upon a throne, that she knew not how to think of sitting in the dust, yet she must; for verse 3. I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man: How then? I will meet thee as if I were a beast, or Lyon, Thou shalt finde no kinde of humanity at all from me, not only not the kindneses and mercies of a God, but not so much as the kindness and mercy of a man. Thus the Lord met with that literall Babylon, and so at last he will meet with mystical Babylon. And as he will be to all his proud enemies, a destroying and devouring Lyon: so he appeareth often to his own people, he saith even to Jerusalem, and to Zion, I will not meet you as a man, when you are carnall and walk as men. The usual dealings of God with his people are full of compassion, In measure (peck-peck) when it shooteth (or when thou sendest it) forth, thou wilt debate with it, He stayeth his rough winde in the day of the East-winde *Isa. 27. 8.* He will not bluster against, and storm his people, when their enemies storm against them; he also measures out their afflictions, and marks what is fit and proportionate to their strength, and for their good, as a Physitian measures and weighs all the ingredients, which he mingles in a potion for his sick Patient: so the next words intimate, By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin. Yet at another time he afflicteth without measure, as if he intended to kill rather then to cure, and take away their lives, rather then to take away their sins. I grant his greatest afflictions are as exactly measured and weighed as the least. God knows to an hairs breadth, the length, and bredth, and to a graine the weight and burden of the longest, broadest, and weightiest affliction: but when he afflicts greatly, he is said to afflict without measure, because things unmeasurable, or which cannot easily be measured, are very great. And if ever the Lord afflicted any of his (in this sense) without measure, surely he afflicted Job so, who thus cries out, Thou buntest me like a fierce Lyon.*

Idem

Erudit, licet
aliquantisper
remittas tamen
statim redis,
&c.

And again thou shewest thy self marvellous (or wonderfull upon me.)

Again.

We render it as an Adverb; others, as a Verb, Thou returnest, and shewest thy self wonderfull upon me. The sense is the same in both

both, noting the continued or repeated acts of his affliction. Thou art still and still wonderfull against me; as if Job had said, Lord, Thou no sooner ceasest, but thou beginnest again, thou no sooner takest off thy hand, but I feel it again; if thou grantest me a little breathing, and withdrawest from me, thou returnest again; if thou givest over the chase a while, thou pursuest it again, with as loud a cry, with as fierce assaults as ever; my sorrows know no intermission, my pains know not only no period, but no pause, I have storm upon storm, grief upon grief, here much and there much, I am alwayes and every where again afflicted, though already half dead with affliction.

Whence observe.

God doth often renew the same, or send new afflictions upon his choicest servants.

One would think that light should follow darkness, and day succeed the night, that though sorrow continue all the night, yet joy should come in the morning, that after wounding we should have healing, and after sickness, health. So they promised themselves (Hos. 6. 1.) Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us, he hath smitten, and he will binde us up: yet many have felt, wounding after wounds, and smiting after blows; darkness hath slept after darkness, and their sorrow hath had a succession of greater sorrows. It was a speciall favour to Paul, when Epaphroditus was restored (Phil. 2. 27.) He was sick nigh unto death, but (saith he) God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also; and why? Lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. God would not do what some of his enemies thought to do, add affliction to his bonds; therefore he healed Pauls helper, and kept him alive, in whom he so much delighted. Sorrow upon sorrow is a mournful bearing, yet many a precious Saint hath born that coat. The promise to the Church is, That her peace shall be as a river, and her prosperity as the waves of the Sea, Isa. 66. 12. When the Church shall come to her full beauty, and attain a perfect restauration, then her peace shall be a continued peace, she shall have peace upon peace, everlasting successions of peace; a river being supplied, and fed with a constant stream, the waters that flow to day, will flow again to morrow; peace like a river is peace, peace, or perpetual peace. Sions peace shall not be as a land-flood, soon up, and as soon down again, but as a river, and (which yet heightens it) her prosperity shall be as the waves of the sea. If the winde do but stir upon the face of the sea, you shall have

Una vice post
aliam Ab. t. zr.
Iterum ite-
rumq; ostendis
miranda tua
fusa in me.
Drus.
In me non ca-
ret emphasi, q.
d. in me jam
sene mortuo-
et pena con-
fesso. Merc.

have wave upon wave, waves rolling and riding one upon the back of another. Such shall be the prosperity of Zion on earth for a time, and it will be for ever in heaven: there peace shall be as a river to eternity, and prosperity as the waves of the sea, joy upon joy, and comfort upon comfort, riding and rolling one upon the back of another. As it shall be thus with the peace of the Church at last; so it may be with the afflictions of the Church, or of any member of the Church at present. Their afflictions may be as a river, and their sorrows as the waves of the sea, coming on again and again, renewed as often as abated.

תתפלל אבי

Mirabilis
in me.

Again, thou shewest thy self wonderfull, or marvellous against, or upon me.

Both rendrings are consistent with the original.

Marvellous upon me.

Mirificum fit
spectaculum ho-
mo, qui tam di-
ra patitur tam
constanti in vi-
dog; animo.

That is, thou dost not punish or afflict me in an ordinary way. Marvels are not every dayes work. Thou takest a new, a strange course to try me: such afflictions as mine have no parallel, such have scarce been heard of, or recorded in the history of any age. Who hath heard of such a thing as this? thou seemest to design me for a president to posterity, or to shew in my example what thou canst do upon a creature. *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.* As Moses speaks concerning Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, when they murmured, and mutined against him, and against Aaron, *If these men dye the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, then, &c.* The Lord to manifest his extream displeasure against those mutineers, did (as it were) devise a new kinde of death for them, *If these men die the common or the ordinary death of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me;* These men have given a new example of sin, and surely God will make them a new example of punishment. Job speaks the same sense, *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me;* thou wilt not be satisfied in afflicting me after the rate or measure of other men; all the Saints should do some singular thing, and many of them suffer some singular thing. The Apostle assures his *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but that which is common to man.* Job seems to speak the contrary. A temptation hath taken me, which is not common to man.

Further,

Further, These words, *Thou art marvellous upon me*, have reference to God who sent those afflictions, as well as unto the afflictions which he sent; as if he had said, Lord, thou art now besides thy nature and thy custome; thou art mercifull, and thou delightest in mercy; thou art good, and thou doest good; how or whence is it then, that thou art so fierce against me, and pourest out so many evils upon me? I could not (knowing thee as I do) have beleived, though it had been told me, that thou wouldest have been so rigorous and incompassionate; if a professed enemy had done this, he had done like himself, and had been no wonder unto me; but now as thou hast afflicted me, till I am become a wonder unto many, so thou, O Lord, art become a wonder unto me, and to all who hear how thou hast afflicted me. Meek *Moses* made himself a wonder, when he broke out in anger. Every man is wondered at, when he doth that which he is not enclined to doe, or uot used to do. Is it not a wonder to see the patient God angry, the mercifull God severe, the compassionate God in exorable? Thus, saith *Job*, *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me*.

Hence observe.

First, *That some afflictions of the Saints are wonderfull afflictions.*

As God doth ~~not~~ often send his people strange deliverances, and works wonders to preserve them; so he sends them many strange afflictions, and works wonders to trouble them. And as many punishments of sin upon wicked men, so some tryals of grace upon godly men are very wonderfull. The Lord threatneth the Jews (*Deut. 28. 59.*) that he would make their plagues wonderfull, he would make strange work among them. And he saith of *Jerusalem*, *I will wipe it, as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down, or wiping it and turning it upon the face thereof,* (*2 Kings 21. 13.*) To see a great City handled like a little dish, or a strong Nation turned topsie turvy (as we say) or the bottome upwards, is a strange thing. It is an ordinary thing to see Cups and Platters turned up-side down, but it is not ordinary to see Kingdoms and Nations turned up-side down. To wipe *Jerusalem* as a dish, was to do that which was never done before. Some expound that place of the frequency of affliction, that God would smite them again and again; as they that make clean a dish, wipe it over and over, that no filth may stay in it. The Seventy and the Vul-

*Delebo Jeru-
salem sicut de-
lexi solent ta-
bulæ. Vulg.*

Vulgar trait, *I will blot out Jerusalem as they use to blot out a table-book that is written all over*. He that hath a table-book full of writing, and would write more, takes a cloth or a sponge, and blotteth out what was written: and that he may thorowly wipe his table-book, he rubs it often with his sponge, to get the letters clear out. Thus God threatned to do with Jerusalem, *He would wipe, or blot out, her golden characters and honourable inscriptions, all nothing of Jerusalem but her shame, and her sin should remain unblotted out*. Was not the judgement brought upon Jerusalem a wonder? when the Prophet saith (Lam 4. 12.) *The Kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world would not have beleived it*. The Apostle speaks thus of his own, and of his fellow Apostles afflictions (1 Cor. 4. 9.) *We are made a spectacle (as upon a theatre) unto the world, and to Angels, and to men*. All begin to wonder at us, what the matter is, what strange creatures we are, whom the Lord suffers to be thus used. The people of God are often a gazing stock to the world in regard of what they do, and not seldom in regard of what they suffer.

Secondly, observe,

That when God doth greatly afflict his own people, he goes out of his ordinary way.

He shews himself marvellous or wonderfull: a man is never marvelled at when he goes his old pace in his old path. God loves to have his hand in the honey-pot, therefore it is strange to see him give his people a bitter cup to drink, or feeding them with wormwood and with gall. Judgement is the strange work of God (Isa. 28. 21.) *The Lord shall be wrath in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act*. And if every work of judgement be his strange work, a work he delighteth not to be conversant in, what then are great and sore judgements? Though the Lord be infinitely pleased in the executions of judgement, yet because (if a more may be conceived in infinity) he is more pleased with mercy, therefore judgement is called his *strange work, his strange act*. To see a Prince renowned for clemency and pity, passing a severe sentence, is a strange sight. We say he hath shewed himself marvellous, he hath gone against both his practice and his nature, his custome and his inclination. To see any man do what he useth not, hath somewhat of wonder in it; much more to see God do so. When he taketh up his rod we begin to start, how much more when

when he taketh up his sword, when he hunts those like a Lyon, whom he dearly loveth, and useth those as wilde beasts, who are his precious children; when he smites them with rigour, whom he carrieth in his own bosome. These, these are acts which represent him to admiration: as many acts of his power and mercy, cause the Saints to cry out, admiringly, yet joyfully, *Who is a God like unto thee?* So some acts of his visible severity cause others of them to cry out admiringly, yet sorrowfully, *Why, O God, dost thou act, in appearance, so unlike thy self?*

Verse. 17. *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me (or thou bringest new witnesses against me) and encreaseth thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.*

This 17th verse is but a further amplification of what he had spoken before, setting forth the greatness and frequent returns of his trouble.

Thou renewest.

The first day of the moneth is called *Chodesh* in the Hebrew from the word here used, because then there was a new Moon, or a change of the Moon; so, *Thou renewest*, thou makest a change, I have many new Moons, but they are all and always at full in sorrow. *Thou renewest*

Chodesh novilunium, primus dies mensis, quo quasi luna in novatur.

Thy Witnesses.

The Septuagint saith, *Thy examinations*; so it is an allusion to the tryall of a malefactor, who is examined by the Judge, and if he deals not plainly in confession, then his examination is renewed. Thus, saith *Job*, thou sendest (as it were) new examiners with more articles and additionall Interrogatories, as if I had conceal'd somewhat, and had not told thee my whole heart.

We translate (and so the word most properly beareth) *witnesses*; the sense is the same. As some malefactors are often examined, so more evidence and new witnesses are brought against them: though in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word shall be established, yet where there are more witnesses then two or three, there is more establishment.

Again, As they who are of a wrangling and unquiet disposition, will never sit down in a suit; when by the examination of some witnesses, they have brought the matter to a tryall, and are

C c c c

cast,

*Non tam vide-
tur de instaura-
tione plurium
testium queri,
quam de senten-
tiæ ferendæ di-
latione & mo-
râ. Pined.*

cast, yet this doth not satisfie them, they will have their writ of errour, and bring the matter about again, in another Court. Thus (saith *Job*) as if the Lord were resolved, this sute should never have an end, *He reneweth his witnesses against me.* When I think all is concluded and agreed between us, I am as much to seek as ever: he brings all about again. So that after all my travel, I am as far from an end, as I was at the beginning, I am where I was, and am like to continue there, for I see the Lord *renewing his witnesses against me still.*

The doubt is, What or whom he meaneth by these Witnesses?

*Philippus in
10.*

One saith, these witnesses were devils. Satan accused him at first, and he is not alone, either in tempting or accusing, he can soon have a legion to joyn with him in any design of wickedness. But I pass that opinion.

Secondly, Others say, The Witnesses were *Jobs* three friends, they all testified against him, *Eliphaz* began, and *Bildad* was his second, *Zophar* stood ready to follow; all against *Job*.

*Panauius
peccati, quasi
de statione de-
cedere,
aliam quasi
succenturiatam
suffecturus es.
Goc.*

Thirdly, By witnesses, most (and they most clearly) understand his afflictions, *Thou renewest thy witnesses;* that is, thou bringest new troubles to testify against me. When one affliction hath spoken at thy bar against me, thou callest for the testimony of another, and of another, and when there will not be another, I know not, unless it be, when I am not. When *Naomi* was become *Marah*, (her former pleasures being turned into bitterness) she saith (*Ruth*, 1. 21.) *The Lord hath testified against me.* *Job* is very express in the point at the sixteenth Chapter of this book, and the eight verse, which may be a Commentary upon this. *Thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me, beareth witness to my face.* Afflictions bring in evidence, and testify many wayes.

They sometimes witness for us, evidencing our graces, our faith, patience, sincerity and submission to the hand of God, they are witnesses also of our adoption or Spiritual sonship (*Heb.* 12. 8.) *If you be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.* It is no good sign to be free from sufferings. *Hear ye the rod,* saith the Prophet *Micah*: as we ought to hear it, calling us from sin: so we may hear it calling us sons, Chastenings speak our priviledges, as well as our duties.

They often witnesses against us:

First,

First, That sin is seated in us, and hath been acted by us. If we had no sin, we should know no sorrow. Though some afflictions are not sent out directly against sin, yet every affliction is both a consequent and a testimony of remaining sin. The bundle of rods at our backs, saith, there is folly and sin bound up in our hearts: and when once we are purged from all sin, we shall hear no more of any affliction, of any rod. We shall be past suffering, as soon as we are past sinning.

Secondly, They are witnesses in speciall, of that great sin, the pride of our hearts and lives. If there were not swelling and impostumations of pride in our spirits, we should not feel such lancings. *Paul* himself acknowledges that they were growing upon him, if God had not taken a severe course to keep them down, *Lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me* (2. Cor. 12. 7.) Hence afflictions are called humiliations, both because an afflicted person is humbled, or laid low by the hand of God, as also because afflictions are sent to humble, and lay us low in our selves. Now, if one speciall business which affliction hath with us, be to humble us, then doubtless affliction witnesseth that there is pride in us. That which is sent to remove an evil, shews the presence of it.

Thirdly, They are witnesses, by bringing to our remembrance the acting of forgotten sins. Affliction is a help to memory. That which we forget we have done or spoken, witnesses coming in, make us remember, so also do our troubles. When the brethren of *Joseph* had been put in ward three dayes, and heard him demand one of them to be left, as an hostage in prison, till they brought *Benjamin*: This distress caused them to say, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this distress come upon us* (Gen. 42. 21.) The guilt of that sin was about twenty years old, but they felt not the smart of it, till themselves smarted for it; their imprisonment set their memories at liberty, and when they saw themselves in danger to become bondmen to the *Egyptians*, they had witness enough of their selling *Joseph* for a captive to the *Ishmaelites*.

Fourthly, Afflictions witness obstinacy and resolvedness in the wayes of sin, or, that afflicted persons or Nations turn not for sin. Every wound will open its mouth as a witness, and

every stroak will bring an evidence against the impenitent. The troubles which God brought upon *Abaz* witnessed emphatically (2 Chron. 28. 22.) *This is that King Abaz, who in the time of his distress, did trespass yet more against the Lord.* If we are not bettered by our distresses, our distresses testifie that we are naught, how much more when we are worse in our distress? As all good things which we have received, so all evils which we have suffered, will rise up in judgement against those who still continue evil.

Firstly, Afflictions witness two things concerning God: First, that he hath an eye upon us, and care of us. He will not let us want any thing that is needfull for us, no not affliction. Due chastisement given a childe, is an argument that his father loveth him, and looks to him. Secondly, They are witnesses of Gods fatherly displeasure. Some say, God cannot be displeased with his children, because his love is everlasting. But will any man say, A father doth not love his childe, because he corrects him? yet a father never correcteth his childe, but when he is displeased with him: Parents may not strike unprovoked, and 'tis rare that God doth so. A man may be much displeased with, and much love the same person at the same time, and 'tis very usual for God to do so. Afflictions never testifie any the least hatred of God against his people, but they often testifie some, and sometimes great displeasure against his people.

Lastly, Afflictions upon the godly are reckoned very sufficient and credible witnesses by the world, that either they are not godly, or that surely some great ungodliness hath been acted by them. How many precious men have been cast upon this evidence, for traitors and rebels against God. *Job's* friends took this for proof enough that he was wicked. They could not be perswaded he was good, because he endured so many evils, as the high Priest cried out against Christ, what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy; so said *Job's* friends concerning him, what need have we offurther witness? Behold we have seen his misery. What do these losses in his estate, and ruines upon his family? What do these sores upon his body, and sorrows in his soul, but publish unto us (what he hath kept close and concealed) the profaneness of his spirit, and the hypocrisie of his former profession. *Job* perceiving his friends making use all along of this proof, as of their chiefest and strongest

medium,

medium, might wel complain to God, upon the renewall of every dayes affliction; *Thou renewest thy witnesses against me.*

And encreasest thine indignation upon me, or, thy indignation encreaseth upon me.

In the beginning of the verse his own afflictions did encrease, but here the indignation of God. Indignation is more greivous then affliction, and the indignation of God is the most greivous indignation.

The word signifies wrath, displeasure, fierce, fiery wrath, hot consuming displeasure.

Increaseth.

There is a double increase here noted. First, Extensive. Secondly, Intensive; an increase both in multitude and magnitude; as if he had said, I have more troubles in number, and more in weight.

Indignation is here put for the effects of indignation; neither the wrath, nor the love of God do ever encrease in him, but in their exertions or in the putting of them forth towards us.

Observe from it,

First, *That a godly man may conceive himself under the indignation of God.*

The Church stoops to it (Mic. 7. 9.) *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.*

Secondly Observe,

That the more we see of the indignation of God in any affliction, the sorer is the affliction.

As the love and smiles of God comfort the Saints more then all the outward comforts he heaps upon them; a little with much sensible love, is to us huge mercy. So the disfavour and frowns of God, trouble the Saints more then all the troubles, which he heaps upon them. A little with much sensible disfavour, is to us a heavy cross. Let trouble increase, yet if displeasure abate, the spirit of a man will bear and stand under it, though his flesh and outward man fall under it. Though the furnace should be heated seven times hotter, yet if the Lord do but let down one beam or ray of his love into the soul, all that burning fire will be but like a warm Sun. But when the scorplings of indignation mingle with affliction, this is dreadfull. *The anger of a fool* (saith Solomon)

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is very heavy; yet that is not so much as a feather to a millstone or a mountain, compared with the anger of God. And though believers are freed from that anger and indignation which he darts upon his enemies, yet they to sense, yea & to their present opinion, may be dealt with as enemies. And though the indignation which God pours upon his own people, and that upon the wicked, be as different as their states are; yet the one may be under as much temporary pain and sorrow as the other is. For as an hypocrite may for a time taste as much of the goodness of God, and feel as much joy in his service, and sometimes more, then a man who is godly and sincere, so also may one who is godly and sincere, taste more of the displeasure of God for a time, and feel as much sorrow in his sufferings, and sometimes more, then a wicked man.

*Per se militans
in me. Vu'g.*

Job concludes with the same thing, in a different habit of words. *Changes and war are against me.* I have variety of afflictions, a multitude of afflictions, and afflictions in their strength, these three things are implied in those two words, *Changes and war*; he had variety of afflictions, for *changes were upon him.* He had many and strong afflictions, *For war was upon him.* One strong man cannot make a war, nor many weak ones. And it is as strange that this should be called a war, which was but against one weak man. The *Roman* stories cry up the honour of a man, who alone upon a narrow pass made a stand against a whole army, till supplies came, what shall we then say of *Job*, who single and alone maintained his standing against many armies, and held out a long war? *Changes and war are upon me.*

Excidere, quod
exciditur immu-
tatur à statu
suo.

Est tempus quo
quis institutione
aut militari of-
ficio est.

Citra hos tantos
dolores mihi
certum tempus
est prescriptum,
intra quod sum
moriturus.

Merc.

The first word which signifies *changes*, signifies also destruction or cutting off. Some render it so here, *excision or cutting off* (by which he meaneth death) *is upon me.* The other word which we translate *war*, noteth also a set or an appointed time, as was shewed at the first verse of the 7th Chapter, *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* So some translate it here, putting all together thus, *Excision* (or death, the cause being put for the effect) *is upon me and determined time of my life.*

M. Broughton translates, *Changes and stayed army have I.* Taking in both interpretations of the word, so his sense may be expressed in this tenour, *Lord, have not I a settled and determined time to die? Why then are such extrem afflictions prepared against, and charged upon me, as if by these thou wouldst hasten my death, and*
bring

bring me to my grave sooner then thou thyself hast appointed? I shall dye at the time thou hast determined, though thou shouldest not distress my life, and even force out my breath with such pressing extremities.

Further, Taking the latter word for a prescribed time: some conceive Job carrying an allusion to those who are surprized with feavers and agues: they have changes, some well dayes, and some sick dayes, yet the fever returns upon a set time, or in a constant recourse, till the distemper is checked; As if he had said, My afflictions are like feaver fits; though I have some intermission, yet I finde a regression, the fit comes upon me again; Changes, at set times are upon me.

Hanc sensum amplectuntur, Aben. Ezra. Rab. Sal.

But rather, according to the letter of our translation, Changes and war are against me; that is, I am exercised with variety of wars. The word imports any kinde of change, change of times or change of things, it signifies also change of garments (Judg. 14. 12.) That notion of the word, hath an elegancy in it in reference to Job's condition. He was a man cloathed with affliction, sorrow encompassed him as a long mourning cloak, and Job had changes of this raiment, he went not alwayes in one sute, though his sutes were still of one colour, for he went alwayes in blacks.

Exerceor contrariis & inter se compugnantis malis vel potius variis & sibi invicem succedentibus malorum agminibus, Merc.

Again, We may interpret this change, of his change from one estate to another, from joy to sorrows, from peace to trouble, from plenty to want, from costly robes to filthy rags. Time was when Job went in scarlet, and fine linnen, and, if he pleased, might have fared deliciously every day; but when he spake this, he was in another state and habit, cloathed with sackcloth, and lying in the dust. It is said of wicked men (Psalm. 55. 9.) Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God. Every creature is subject to change, and hath some changes every day; God only is unchangeable. Yet some men seem to have no changes, & though they cannot be free from natural changes one moment, yet they may be free from many years civil changes: they may be so far from such changes as Job felt, from good to evil, that all the changes they are acquainted with, may be only from good to better, from strong to stronger, from rich to richer: that's the intent of the Psalm; they have no changes from joy to sorrow, from health to sickness, from riches to poverty, from honour to disgrace, Therefore they fear not God; their hearts were hardened, because their estates prospered.

παντίστον τρεπτόν.

So then, these changes import, either divers sorts of afflictions,
or

Agmen quid-
dam malorum,
ut etiam dici-
tur, lœna vel
Illas malorum.
Merc.
Vexationes
turmatim me
invadunt.
Druf.
Sagittandi et
militandi var-
ba sepe et ele-
ganter in scrip-
turis declarant
Dei contra
impios per fla-
gella confli-
ctu.

or divers returns and charges of the same afflictions. The second word carrieth that allusion, *Changes, and war are upon me*; that is, such changes as there is in war, when first one regiment charges, and another seconds, and so regiment after regiment, company after company, file after file, now the right wing, and then the left, at last the reserve. Thus the Lord seemed to bring up his bands and troops of afflictions to assault *Job* in turns and changes, till his whole army had assaulted and skirmished with him. Those military terms of shooting and warring, are frequent figures in Scripture, shewing how God conflicts with sinfull, weak man, after the manner of men. Observe hence,

First, *That afflictions are at the command of God.*

He marshals and disposes them, as armies are by their Generals in times of war. He can say to one affliction, as the Centurion to his souldiers, Go, and it goeth, to another, Come, and it cometh, to a third, do this, and it doth it. All armies of sorrow are led by God in chief. They charge whom he pleateth, and where he pleaseth, high or low, person or nation: if he gives the word, they fall on presently, nor will they return till he orders their retreat.

Secondly, Note, *That the Lord hath variety of wayes and means to afflict and try his people.*

Changes and war are against me. The Physitian hath variety of medicines for his sick patient; if one removes not the distemper, he changes, and tryes a second. There is nothing so full of changes, as war, not only in regard of the uncertainty of events, but variety of means, new forces being raised, and new stratagems used, from day to day. *Hast thou but one blessing?* said *Esau* to his father *Isaac*; the hand of man may be straitned to one blessing, or one blow, but the hand of God is never straitned. As he hath store of blessings, so of blows, and can give both out, both in degree and kind diversified; if one army of evils doth not humble and conquer us to his obedience, he can quickly levy a new one. All creatures will come in to his help, if he do but set up his standard, or give command to beat his drum. He changed his armies ten times against *Pharaoh*; *Pharaoh* had indeed changes and war upon him, yet no change wrought in him: therefore the war was changed, till he was destroyed. This war with *Job* was not a destroying one, but it was a terrible one, so terrible that he cries out in the language of his former complaints, *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

J O B, Chap. 10. Verse 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?

O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

I should have been as though I had not been, I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

Are not my dayes few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.

Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;

A land of darkness, as darkness it self, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.

THese five verses are the conclusion of Job's reply to Bildad; there are four things remarkable in them.

First, He complaineth that ever he lived a day or an hour in the world, at the beginning of the 18th verse, *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

Secondly, He wisheth that he had dyed speedily: seeing he could not have that (supposed) happiness not to be born into the world; his next request is, that he might not have stayed long in the world; he would not have appeared as a man, no nor as a childe, but that birth and burial might have been contiguous, not knowing the distance of a day, verse 18, 19. *O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been, I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.*

Thirdly, He sheweth, that however he had been disappointed of both those votes, yet he could not live long; as if he had said, *Though I have found much trouble in the world, yet I shall not much trouble the world, the time of my departure is at hand, I have lived most of my dayes already, and all my dayes are not many, verse 20. Are not my dayes few?*

Fourthly, He entreateth and sueth that the few dayes of those few dayes which he had to live, might be good dayes, *Are not my dayes few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take*

D d d d

com-

comfort a little, before I goe whence I shall not return, &c.

*Sui obliviscitur
ut supra vi do-
loris. Merc.*

The 18th and 19th verses carry a sense very like to that which hath been opened at the third Chapter of this book, where Job complained of his birth, and was troubled that he had the favour of a being, (because he found such an ill-being) in the world. His passion runneth out here into a vehement expostulation, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? As there, Why dyed I not from the womb?* verse 11.

Job puts the Question, and demandeth an account of God, Why he came out of the womb? There are three sorts of questions.

First, Such as arise from a desire of necessary information; 'Tis good to ask that we may learn.

Secondly, Such as arise from a needlesse curiosity. 'Tis not good to ask what no duty enjoyns us to learn.

Thirdly Such as arise from pure passion, or rather, from muddled perturbation, not so much desiring information from others, as to vent our selves. 'Tis very ill to ask when we care not to learn. Such is the question here put. (say some) a passionate question, arising from the fume and vapours of a distempered minde, desiring to ask, rather then to be answered, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* As if he had said, *Was I born only to be an object of evil? came I into the world to be made a sad spectacle to the world, to Angels and to men? have my dayes been lengthened out on purpose, that my troubles might be lengthened?* Such a troubled sense there is in these words. The complaints of Saints may sometimes look like the blasphemies of wicked men.

Job complaineth of his birth, and seems forgetfull of all former benefits.

Hence observe,

*Dum ite agi
mecum, fit et
beneficio tuo
non benefici-
um. Coc. 4.*

When we want the mercies we would, we grow angry with the mercies which we have had.

David speaks it to the praise of God, *Thou art he that tookest me out of my mothers womb* (Psal. 22.) Job speaks it as a damage to himself, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

Secondly, observe,

We are ready to think we live to no end, if we have not our own ends.

That's the voice of nature, and so far as nature prevails in us, it speaks in us. Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Man is apt to say, there is no reason for that, of which he seeth not the reason.*

When we are at our wits end, and at our reasons, we think there is an end of all wisdom and reason, as if neither God nor man could give an account beyond ours, or answer when we are non-plust.

Yet we may conceive *Job* had a further sense, which yields a more mollifying meaning of these words, for though he (as all the Saints in the old Testament) was much in the dark about the benefit of sufferings, which the Gospel hath now more clearly revealed to us, and called us unto, yet he might have some other intendment in these expostulations: we may charitably suppose him troubled that he was in a condition of life, which (as he conceived) hindered the main end of his life, the glorifying of God, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* as if he had said, Lord, I am in a state, wherein I know not how to honour thee, and then what is my life worth unto me? Thy justice is greatly obscured towards me, many are ready to say, for my sake, that surely thou art a hard Master, leaving them to reap evil who have sowed good, and paying thy faithfull and most active servants their wages in sufferings. And as for mercy, I taste little of that; comforts are dainties with me: my cup is bitter, my sorrows are multiplied: Now when neither justice nor mercy move visibly towards me, how shall I glorifie thee? And wherein can my life be usefull or advantageous to thee? Am I not like a broken vessel, a vessel wherein there is no pleasure? Wherefore then was I brought forth out of the womb?

This exposition teaches us, That,

A Godly man thinks he liveth to no purpose, if he do not live to the praise and glory of God.

God hath made all things for himself, and it is the design of the Saints to be for him. While that end is attained they can easily part with all their own; and where that is crossed, they cannot be pleased in the attainment of any of their own. The interest of Christ is not only their greatest, but all their interest. Any stop of, much more a disservice to this, causeth an honest heart to cry out with *Job*, and ('tis easie to conceive) it caused *Job* to cry out, *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

Nunc in me justificatus ob-
scuretur, &
ego non sentio
fructum gratiae
tuae quā in re
ergo gloria tua
inservire po-
test viro meo?
Goc.

O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me !

O that I had given up the ghost !

YUX
Fseilem & sine
dolore mortem
inuit.

The Originall signifies usually a gentle and an easie kinde of death ; Giving up the ghost, is not a pulling or a violent rending of life away from us, but our laying it down, our surrender or willing resignation of it. Some read this clause, not as we optatively, *O that I had given up the ghost !* but declaratively, *Wherefore hast thou brought me out of the womb ? for then I had quickly given up the ghost.* But rather take it as a wish, *O that I had given up the ghost !*

And no eye had seen me !

Innotum est
omnibus ut
cognosci se ve-
dant, & studio
seneantur res
alias cognos-
cendi.

That is (say some) I would I had dyed before I had been born, for then no eye had seen me. Or, more generally thus: *O that I had dyed speedily, so speedily that I might have gone out of the world, before I was observed to have been there : Who delights to see the dead ? especially a child dead born, or dying as soon as born ? Sarah was the delight of Abrahams eyes, while she lived, and yet as soon as she was dead, he gives any money for a sepulchre to bury her out of his sight. Or again, Job that he might shew how little he regarded life, disregards that which is most desireable in life. Man naturally desires, To see, and to be seen, to know, and to be known. That which carries a great part of the world, is an affectionation to be pointed at, and taken notice of, as Some-bodies in the world. He that liveth unseen in the world, is a man out of the world, or as one buried alive. To be in prison is a great punishment, because a prisoner liveth out of view ; he cannot freely see or be seen. Job wishes no eye had seen him, rather then his eyes should have seen so much evil, or that others should have seen him in the midst of so many evils.*

Hence note,

First, *That undue and unreasonable questions, are usually followed and fruited with undue and unreasonable wishes.*

Having put the question, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb ?* See what a wish comes upon it, *O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me !* He that takes undue liberty to speak or do, knows not where he shall restrain himself. They who alwayes act as far as they may, shall often act beyond what they ought. And they who act at all beyond what they

are directed, are often carried beyond what themselves intended.

Secondly, Observe, *Man had rather not be seen at all, then to be seen miserable.*

To be seen is a great part of the comfort of this life, but who would not gladly exchange it for ease in obscurity? it is an honour to be seen, but who would be seen cloathed with dishonour? When Christ is prophesied of, as the great pattern of patience and self-denial, it is said, *He hid not his face from shame and spitting*, Isa. 50. 6. To be a spectacle of misery, is to some worse then their being miserable. They would count it a piece of their happiness, to be unhappy in a corner; and their troubles half removed, if they might steal their troubles. As to be in a good estate, and to know that we are so, makes our estate better to us: So to be in an ill estate, and to be known that we are so, makes it to some tempers a great deal worse. As the hypocrite hopes when he sins, that no eye sees him: so many wish when they suffer, *O that no eye had seen me!*

Verse 19. *I should have been, as though I had not been, I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.*

Some read this verse also as a wish, *O that I had been, as though I had never been! O that I had been carried from the womb to the grave.*

He confirms what he had said, by a further declaration of his condition, in case he had not been brought forth out of the womb, or had died before he had been seen in the throng of the world; Why, what then Job? Then, *I should have been as though I had not been*, and my afflictions should never have had any being: so speedy a death had quitted me of all the evils of my life. I should not have sipt or tasted, much less have drunk so deep of this cup of sufferings. It is said of Abortives who die in the womb, and of such as die immediately after they are born, *They are, and they are not*; they who live but a moment in nature, shall live for ever. A life here less then a span long, will be eternity long: yet as to the world, such a life is no life, such a being no being. Lawyers say, they who die before, or as soon as they are born, are reckoned as unborn; they make no change in states, they never had a name, or an interest in the world, and so they go for nothing in the world. The Prophet *Obadiab* (verse 16.)

threatens

*Est et non est
Otimestru
partus.
Hippoc.*

*Abortivus pro
non nato cense-
tur in jure.*

threatens Edom, *That they shall be as though they had not been*; that is, they must perish, and their memorial with them. Some are so thrust out of the world, that they shall be as if they had never been; and some come into the world so, that their being was, as if they had never been.

A short life is by common estimation no life.

As in heaven, where we shall live for ever, we shall be as if we had ever been: So on earth, some live so little, that they are as if they never were: that which hath an eternal duration, and shall never end, is as if it had ever begun; and that which is but of a short duration and ends quickly, is as if it had never begun. The reason why the fruit of sin goes for nothing, is, because the pleasure of sin is but for a season, and that a very little season, *What fruit have ye of those things whereof ye are now ashamed?* That is, Ye have no fruit, or your fruit was nothing: we may say of all the pleasures of sin, their cradle is their grave, or more near *Jobs* language, they are carried from the womb to the grave. So he speaks next of himself.

I should have been carried from the womb to the grave

*Proverbiale est,
ab utero ad se-
pulchrum, cum
quis simulac-
natus est mori-
tur.*

I should have passed without noise or notice. There would have been little trouble with me in the world, I should have made but one journey, and that a short one. The speech is proverbial: *From the womb to the grave*, is the motto of *Infant-death*. The Septuagint read it as an expostulation, *Wherefore was I not carried out from the womb to the grave?* It would have been a happiness to me, either not to have been at all, or to have had a being but equivalent (in common account) to a not being. And thus it had been with me, if my first step out of my mothers womb: had been into the womb of that *grand mother* the earth. *Job* is often upon the same point, renewing his desires after death: he did so (as hath been toucht) at the third Chapter, and at the sixth, and now he is as fierce and fresh upon it as ever.

A godly man may often discover the same infirmity.

Whilest the same stock of corruption remains in us, it is productive of the same corrupt fruit. There is a seminall vertue in the earth, look how often it is plowed and sowed, so often it sends forth a crop; there is a seminal vertue in the earthly part of man, which makes him to put forth evil, as often as occasion plows, and temptation soweth his heart.

Verse 20.

Verse 20. *Are not my dayes few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.*

Are not my dayes few?

There is a difference in reading: Many translatours joyn the verb *Cease*, with this clause: so that whereas we read, *Are not my dayes few? Cease then, and let me alone*; they read, *Will not my few dayes cease? then let me alone that I may take comfort a little.* M. Broughton, and he hath a second varieth yet further, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* Instead of applying the word *few* unto dayes, *Are not my dayes few?* they (taking in the verb) joyn it to the act of God, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* That is, Will not God forbear a little to trouble me? Will not he give me a breathing time in my dayes, which are but few? Surely he will, he will not be so strict with me, I doubt not of a gracious answer to this humble petition.

Primo adjungunt colo.
Numquid non paucitas dierum meorum finitur brevi?
Vulg.
Annon pauci dies mei cessantes, sc. deficientes? Targ.
Annon paulisper diebus meis cessabit? Jun.

But rather follow our sense, and let the first clause be a question, *Are not my dayes few?* And then the next words are an inference or use which he makes from it, *Cease then, and let me alone, &c.*

Are not my dayes few?] The question doth affirm, Yes, my dayes are few. The sense may be made out one of these threeways, and not unprofitably by all three,

First thus, As a justification of his former wishes and desires to die: Have I not upon good reason wished that I had never lived? Who can be in love with a short life, and a long trouble? *Are not my dayes few?* Or

Secondly, As an answer to such as objected against him for wishing he had not lived: Do you know (said they) What you have said? Is life such a small matter with you? or do you understand what you desire, when you desire death? is deformed death become a beauty in your eye? What ever you think it, life is a precious jewel? Yes (saith Job) I know very well what life is, and I know if I had dyed before I was born, I had not lost much life; What's the life of a few dayes? The life of eternity is worth the having and esteeming; but why should you think I have wished away a matter of moment, when I wished away this life? For are not my dayes few?

Whence observe, The loss of a whole life in this world, is no great loss.

We cannot lose a great deal, when all is but a little, nor many, when

when we have but a few in all. He loofeth but a few dayes, who dyeth the first day; then, what have we got, when we have lived according to the calculation of nature, many dayes? Job makes this an argument to fatisfie others about his wish, that all his dayes had been cut off: May not we fatisfie our selves by it, when a peice or a part, an end, the worst end of our dayes is cut off? What if we have abated ten or twenty of those years which possibly we might have lived; twenty years are but a few dayes; for a whole life, consisting of three twenties and ten, is but a few dayes. This we are sure of, that the few dayes we loose on earth shall never be missed in heaven; it will be no abatement to our comfort there, to think we lived but a little here; all the sorrows of this life will be swallowed up in the next, and so will our sudden parting with this life.

Thirdly, The clearest sense of these words [*Are not my dayes few?*] is, that they are the ground of a petition for the mitigation of his troubles; as if he had said, *Lord, I have but a while to live in the world; my dayes are few, therefore do not think much that I should have a little comfort and refreshing in these my dayes; consider my life is short, O that thou wouldest slack thy hand, and yield me some ease and comfort in this short life.* He had used this argument at the seventh Chapter, verse 16. *Let me alone, for my dayes are vanity;* here, *Let me alone, for my dayes are few. The fewness of our dayes is one of the vanities of our dayes.*

Are not my dayes few?

Paucitas dierum, i. e. paucissimi dies abstracta significationem incitant et acciunt.

מַעַט

Imminutionem decrementumque significat, q. d. nunquam crescit, sed decrescit, et ad angustias majores indies reducitur, & in perpetua consumptione evanescit. Bold
 מַה הָרַל אֲנִי
Quanti & vi ego. M. O. u. t.

The Hebrew is, *Is not fewness of dayes mine?* Yes, That's my portion. Abstracts often encrease, and sometimes they diminish the sense. Here the sense is diminutive; as if he had said, *My dayes are so far from many, that they are fewness it self: Mine are not encreasing and growing, but declining and abating dayes. My dayes are going down, they are brought into a lesser, and a narrower compass every day. The Chaldee renders, Are not my dayes ceasing? My dayes fade and wear out every day, Shew me how short my life is: (closer to the original) how soon ceasing I am, or as others, What, or of what quantity mine age is, how transitory, how temporary I am.*

Cease then, and let me alone.

Some read it in the third person, *Therefore let him cease from me,*

me, and let me alone; we in the second, *Cease then, and let me alone.* Job looks upon himself as one besieged and straitned with afflictions: Now (saith he) I beseech thee raise thy siege, and draw off thy force from me: Or if thou wilt not make a finall peace with me, yet grant me a cessation, let me have a truce for a limited time, let me not have such continual alarms, or be forced to stand armed continually; let me rest, saith the Septuagint; *Issachar* stooped to burdens, because he desired rest. Some are so burdened that they cannot rest, how much soever they desire it. Job desires God to give him rest, because his dayes were few.

שׁוּבָה לִּי
Deponat à me,
sc. flagellum
aut supplicium.
Deponat exer-
citus suos pre-
cul à me.
Jun.

Hence observe,

First, *It is an argument moving the Lord to forbear sending us many troubles, because we have but few dayes.*

Thus David prayes (Psa'. 89. 47.) *Remember how short my time is, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?* Lord. I have but a few dayes, and shall my dayes be nothing but clouds and darkness? The same argument is used, Psa'. 39. ult. *O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.* I shall soon be gone, let me have some ease, while I stay here. Observe,

Secondly, *That except the Lord withdraw his hand, nothing in the world can give us ease.*

Cease then, and let me alone that I may take comfort; as if he had said, *If thine hand be upon me, in vain do friends comfort me; creatures offer me their help in vain, Cease then and let me alone.*

From the matter of his argument, Observe,

The life of man is short.

It is a common theme, and every man thinks he can declaim upon it, and speak to it; but there are few that can live to, or act by it. A multitude of instructions arise to us from the fewness of our dayes: And did men know indeed that their dayes are few, their evil deeds would not be so many, and their good would be more.

Again, *That mans dayes are so few, yields us not only many instructions, but many wonders.* Is it not strange that we who have but a few dayes in our lives, should have so many afflictions in our lives? that we should have few dayes and many sorrows? Is it not strange that we should have few dayes in our lives, and

E e e

many

many cares about our lives? many cares and few dayes, yea many cares upon one day! *Thou art carefull about many things*, saith Christ to *Martha*: Is it not strange that we should have so few dayes, and so many sins? Few dayes and innumerable sins, so many sins as no man can number them, and so few dayes that a child may number them? And is not this a wonder above all the rest, that we should have but a few dayes, and yet be gravell'd and puzl'd so as we are in numbring them? A little humane learning will serve to number our dayes, but we need a great deal of spiritual learning to number them. A little study in the Mathematicks will do it, but we need more then study, experience in Divinity before we can do it, and yet neither study nor experience can do it, unless God himself be our Tutor, *He only can teach us so to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*. We shall commence fools at last, if we have not one wiser then the wisest upon earth; to teach us this truth.

That I may take comfort a little.

כ"ד
 Roboravit, confortavit, respiciavit, viros collegit.
 The word which we translate to take comfort, signifies such comfort as they find, who being heated extreemly, and extreem thirsty, come to drink at a fountain of sweet waters. The Vulgar readeth it, *Let me alone, that I may mourne a little*; yet taking in the former sense, He seems thus to explain himself: If the Lord would let me alone, I would go and ease my self with complaining, the waters of my head, the fountain of mine eyes would be a refreshing to my wearied soul. *Sorrows are sometimes joyous, and moderate mourning gives the mind a reviving*.

Si dolorem a-
 movire non
 vult, respirandi
 docum aliquem
 et spacium
 concedat.
 Merc.
 But rather, Take it in the generall, *Let me alone that I may comfort my self*, and that these sorrows may abate; I desire to rally, and recollect my scattered thoughts a while, and so take in somewhat of the sweetness of this life before I dye. Cease from me for some refreshing, saith M. Broughton. *I do not expect much, Lord, let me have some before I go whence I shall not return*.

Here observe one common principle of nature,
Man desireth his own good. A well-being, as well as a being. What is there in life for nature to prize, if there be nothing but sorrow in it?

Secondly, Observe, *That great sufferings make us very modest in our demands*.

Job was in great affliction, and now a little comfort would go a great way with him. When the people of *Israel* were in bondage under *Pharaoh* and his task-masters, and had heavier burdens laid upon them, they do not so much as move for a totall release from their task, but modestly complain, *There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick*; as if they had said, let us have straw, and we are willing to make brick. A poor man cries out for a half-peny, for a farthing, not for hundreds or thousands. He that is ready to starve will not ask good chear, or a plentiful feast, but let me have a crust of bread, or a little water. When *Dives* was in hell, what did he desire of *Abraham*? Did he beg to come into his bosome? Doth he say, *Lazarus* is in a good place, let me come too: No, he desired but a drop of water; and what was a drop of water to flames of fire? O how would it delight the damned in hell to think of a cessation, but for one hour from their pain! What a joy would it be unto them, if it should be told them that a thousand, or ten thousand years hence, they should have one good day, or that they might be let alone to take comfort a little! *They who are low, make low demands*. Think of this ye that enjoy much comfort, and swim in rivers of pleasure. Let not the great consolations of God be small to you, when you hear *Job* thus instant and importunate for the smallest. *Let me alone that I may take comfort a little*.

But why is he in such haste for a little comfort? one ground is in the former words, *My dayes are few*; and he backs it with a second in the next. If it come not quickly, it will come too late. I am ready to take my last journey, therefore let me take a little comfort.

Vers. 21. *Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death.*

Before I go.

That is, before I die. Death is a going out of the world; Christ intimates his death under this notion (*John 16.7.*) *If I go the Comforter will come. And, I go from you, &c.* Dying is a journeying from one region to another. *Death is a changing of our place, though not of our company. Before I go; whither?*

Periphrasis moriendi, qui moritur dicitur abire, unde abitionem pro morte veteres usurpant. Dux.

Eccē 2

Whence

Whence I shall not return.

*Eidem resurre-
ctionis non le-
dit. Pin.*

*Indicatur nullam
esse vim in na-
tura cui pareat
mors, et cui
receptacula
animarum obe-
diant, redde-
reque cogantur,
quem semel re-
ceperunt. Pin.*

*Veteres Roma-
ni dicere sole-
bant, abiit &
reversurus
est, resurrexi-
onem carnis
haud obscure
innuentes. Ter.
Salve eternum
mihi maximo
Palla
Eternumque
vile. Virg.
Enead.*

That's a journey indeed. That which pleaseth us in our longest journeys while we live, is a hope of returning to our own homes again. But when we dye we take a journey from whence there is no returning. Not return? Shall not a man return when he dieth? is death an everlasting departure, an eternall night? No, Man shall return, but he shall not return to such a life or state as he had before. He is gone for ever out of this world, and out of all worldly interests. *Job* beleived a resurrection, or a returning from the grave by the power of God, and he knew there was no returning by the power of nature, or by the help of any creature: In that reference, *we go, whence we shall not return.* So *David* speaks of his dead Infant, *I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me,* 2 Sam. 12. 25. When once we are shut up in those chambers of death, and made prisoners in the grave, though all the Princes in the world send warrants for our release, we cannot get released. The pertinacy and stiffness of the grave is such as yields to none. We are fast shut up when we are shut up there. Love and the grave will hardly part with that, which they have closed with, and are possessed of. The grave is one of those three things which are never satisfied, or say it is enough, *Prov.* 30. 15. And as it is unsatiable in receiving, so it is as close in keeping, it will part with nothing. A grave is the Parable of a covetous man; he is greedy to get, and watchfull to hold: when his money goes into his purse, he saith it shall not return: the grave hath a strong appetite to take down, and as strong a stomach to digest. Till God (as I may so speak) by his mighty power gives the grave a vomit, and makes the earth stomach-sick with eating mans flesh, it will not return one morsel. At the resurrection this great eater shall cast up all again. And as they who take strong vomits, are put into a kind of trembling convulsion, all the powers of the body being shaken; such will the prognosticks be of the resurrection. There was an earthquake when Christ arose, God made the earth shake, and commanded it to give back the prisoner, because *it was not possible that he should be holden of it.* And when God speaks the word, it will not be possible for the grave to hold us prisoners: till then it will. It was usual among the Ancients, to say of a dead friend, *He is gone, and he will come again,* intimating a resurrection. Heathens not knowing

knowing nor beleiving it, call death, *An eternall leave-taking* *Valeant qui inter nos discedum volunt.*
or farewell never to meet again. *Tercet.*

Observe from this description of the grave,

That the statutes of death are unrepealable.

Death is an everlasting banishment from the world, *I shall go whence I shall not return.* This may lye very sad upon their spirits, who have not a better place then the world to go to, when they go from the world. To go whence we shall never return, and yet where we cannot endure to be a moment, is deepest misery: Such a man cannot chuse but set out with a sad heart. And that's the reason why wicked men, whose consciences are awakened, go so unwillingly to this sleep, they know whether they are going, only they know they cannot return. *Make ye friends* ('tis Christs counsel) *of the Mummy of unrighteousness,* that when ye fall they may receive you into everlasting habitations (Luk. 10 9.) *Mummy of unrighteousness,* that is, say most Interpreters, Mummy gotten unrighteously; but surely Christ would not teach us to make men our friends, by that which makes God our enemy. They translate better who render it, *Make ye friends of the false or unfaithfull Mummy,* That is, of that Mummy which will deceive and leave you shortly, therefore make you friends, while you have it; that when ye fall, that is when you dye or go out of the world, they may receive you, that is, ye may be received into everlasting habitations; leave not this habitation till ye have got interest in a better. The Saints arm themselves against death by this argument, *We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hand, eternal in the heavens* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) We know there is no return to buildings made with hands, we must leave our houses for ever, our lands for ever, and our relations for ever, but we are assured of a building of God, an house not made with hand, eternal in the heavens. This supported, their hearts, when their earthly houses were falling.

Job having thus described death it self, proceeds to describe the grave, which is the place of death, or the *Black-hall of the King of terrours.* Would you know what this place is, from whence there is no returning? it is, saith he (in the close of this verse) *even the land of darkness, and the shadow of death.* And in the last verse.

*Animula vagula, blandula,
 &c. quæ nunc obibis in loco?
 Adr.*

*Quod est fulsum
 & Anox ob Hel-
 lenistis usu
 Hebræorum
 dicitur. Hens.
 exercit.
 Sacr.*

Verse 22. *A land of darkness, as darkness it self, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.*

This is the place where death dwels, or the seat of death, and here's a description of it, which exceeds the Phanſie of Poets, and the rhetorick of all Heathen Oratours. The Spirit of God riſeth to the height of eloquence in diſcovering that unpleasant region.

This ſubterranean Geography, gives a double character of it. 1. *A land of darkness.* 2. *A land of the ſhadow of death;* both which are aggravated by their additions. It is a land of darkness, but not of an ordinary darkness, *It is a land of darkness, as darkness it ſelf.* It is a land of the ſhadow of death, not of an ordinary ſhadow of death, but of the ſhadow of death, 1. *Without any order.* 2. *Where the light is as darkness.*

A land of darkness.

That is, abounding with darkness, a land where darkness is the ſtaple, and the only commodity to be had. Darkneſs is the hangings and ornament of the houſe of death. The grave is elſewhere called, *A land of forgetfulneſs* (Pſal. 88. 12.) becauſe there all things are forgotten. We read (*Jer. 12. 5.*) of a *land of peace*, that is, a land where peace abounds, a land in every corner whereof peace ſprings and groweth up. *Canaan* (*Deut. 8. 8.*) was called, *A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that ſpring out of the valleys and hills, A land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; A land of oyl-olive, and of boney:* That is, a land where theſe good things were natural and plentiful. A land where the neighbour Nations might furniſh themſelves, and freight their Ships with thoſe commodities. In ſuch a ſenſe *Job* calls the grave, a land of darkneſs; as if he had ſaid, would you know what the merchandize of the grave is? I will tell you, it is darkneſs, there you may have darkneſs as much as you deſire, and beſides that nothing, how much ſoever you deſire it.

*Cum ſepul-
chrum dici-
tur terra
tenebrarum,
ibi tanquam in
nativo ſolo ob-
ſcuritas in-
velliſtur pro-
venire.*

This ſhews the terrour of death to a meer natural underſtand- ing. Many are afraid to be at all in the dark, how much more to be alwayes in darkneſs: As light is put for joy, ſo darkneſs for ſorrow. Darkneſs, whether ſpiritual or natural, is afflictive.

Dark

Dark houses are unpleasant, what then is a land of darkness? The face of a man is darkened with sorrow, and joy is the light of it. It hath been observed that some great Princes have had light beaming out from their eyes. *Augustus* had so sparkling an eye, that few could look upon him: his eyes cast forth rayes like the Sun, dazzling the beholders. Good, gracious Princes cast out beams of favour upon their people, which refresh them as the light. Death and the grave have no light in their faces. Death looks black and grim, hell is extreamest darkness, and the pains of hell are chains of darkness.

*Suetonius in
Augusto, c. 79.*

And of the shadow of death.

There is more then the shadow of death in the grave, death it self dwells there. The words sound an abatement of the sense, but indeed they heighten it. *The shadow of death* is thick darkness, thickest darkness, the very strength of darkness. This shadow is the substance of death, or death with addition of greatest deadlines

*Terra cujus
palpebrae sunt,
sicut caligo um-
brarum mortis.
Targ.*

Job having given the land this dreadfull name, *A land of darkness, and of the shadow of death*, makes it yet more dreadfull by this further explication.

A land of darkness. as darkness it self] Or, *A land of darkness, which looks like darkness.* The word signifies weariness, restlessness, and vexation of spirit. To be in a dark condition, is to be in a wearisome condition. The Vulgar reads it, *A land of misery.* Some darkness hath a degree of light mingled with it, but this is pure or unmixed darkness, darkness in its proper hue, darkness it self. When a man of skill acts skilfully, we say he acts like himself; and when a wicked man doth very wickedly, we say, he doth like himself. The darkness of the grave looks like nothing but it self.

Every evil, the more like it is to it self, the worse it is. When the Apostle would shew sin in its colours, he calleth it *sinfull-sin* (Rom. 7. 13.) *Sin by the commandment became exceeding sinfull*, the commandment caused it to look like it self. Sorrowfull sorrow, and painfull pain are the worst of pains and sorrows. There is sorrow which may consist with some joy and pain, which may cohabit with some ease: but he that hath sorrow like sorrow it self, and pain like pain it self, hath the extremity of both. Thus also every good, the more like it is to it self, the better it is; holiness like it self, is the purest holiness; grace-like it self, is the sweetest grace. When a holy man works like himself, his work is best.

God

God is ever like himself in all he doth, and every thing we do is then best, when it is done most like to what God doth.

And of the shadow of death, without any order; or, The shadow of death, and not orders.

ולא פרר
Et non ordines.

Hebrei ad vi-
cas dici
noſis, æſtis
et hiemis &c.
referunt.
Exvertent vi-
ciſſitudinem.
Jun.

The word which we translate order, is frequent in the Rab- bins: The holy Text hath it only in this place, and here in the plu- rall number, *A land of darkneſs, and the shadow of death, and with- out any orders*, a land unordered. There's no government, no me- thod in the grave. And if it hath no order, then it hath nothing in it but confuſion, nothing but diſorder. That the grave, or the ſtate of death, is without any order, may be underſtood two wayes,

First, Without order, becauſe it hath no changes or viciffi- tudes in it, there is no difference in the grave between night and day, winter and ſummer, hot and cold, wet and dry, between the riſing and ſetting of the Sun: This is the order which God hath ſet in nature; and when the flood had put all things into a kinde of confuſion, God promiſed, *That ſeed-time and harveſt, and cold and heat, ſummer and winter, day and night ſhould not ceaſe*, that is, there ſhould be an everlaſting order continued in the crea- ture. The dead know none of thoſe changes and viciffitudes; as much of the vanity, ſo ſome of the comforts of this life conſiſt in changes; but all is alike in death.

Secondly, There is no order in going to the grave; men do not keep to a rule in dying, nor obſerve their ranks. The old go not alwayes firſt, and then the young; the great before, and the mean following after. Death hath no maſter of the Ceremonies; but takes promiſcuouſly, here a childe, and there a man, here a rich man, and there a beggar. And as there is no order in going thi- ther, ſo none when we are there; the grave mingleth the duſt, and bones of one with another. We cannot diſtinguiſh the rich mans duſt from the duſt of the poor, nor the bones of Kings from thoſe of the loweſt ſubject. Though rich men are buried in more eminent places, and Kings under ſtately Monuments, though their Tombs differ from their inferiours, yet their bones do not. An old Philoſopher was obſerved ſearching a cæmitery, and prying buſily among the Tombs, and being asked, what he looked for, answered, I come to ſee if I can finde the duſt of rich men, and the bones of Princes, but I cannot ſee which is which; the duſt of the rich and of the poor, of Princes and peaſants, are all alike to my eye.

And

And seeing *Job* makes an aggravation of the misery of death, that it is without order; we may observe,

That order hath an excellency, and a beauty in it.

The less order there is in any place or state, the worse it is, and where is no order, there it is worst of all. Civil order is the beauty of Common-wealths, and spiritual order is the beauty of the Church. The Apostle rejoiced to behold the order of the *Colossians*, as well as their faith (*Col. 2. 5.*) His charge to the *Corinthians* is, *Let all things be done decently and in order* (*1 Cor. 14. 40.*) He had warned them (*ver. 33.*) to take of disorder, because *God is not the God of confusion, but of peace*; where order is not kept, the peace cannot be kept. Death is evil, and that's without order; hell is worst of all, and there is no order at all. It is a kinde of death to see any disorder, and a very hell to see all in disorder.

And where the light is as darkness.

Some read by the verb, *Where it shineth like darkness*, or thus, *where it lighteth like darkness*. The Vulgar paraphrases rather then translates, *Where there is everlasting horror*. *Job* said before, it was a land of darkness, and of darkness like darkness it self: yet now he seemeth to affirm, that there is light in the grave, and if there be, how is that darkness like darkness it self? his meaning is, that which looks most like to light in the grave, is darkness, and it is therefore darkness, like darkness it self, because if you can imagin any thing to have a shew of light in the grave, that very light is as darkness. When the Apostle would invincibly argue the infinite wisdom and strength of God, he saith, *The foolishness of God is wiser then men, and the weakness of God is stronger then men* (*1 Cor. 1. 25.*) God is only wise, only strong, how then speaks this Apostle of the foolishness or weakness of God? His meaning is, look what act soever of God appears to man, as having foolishness or weakness in it, even that foolishness is wiser, and that weakness stronger then men. In what sense *Paul* saith, *The foolishness of God is wisdom, the weakness of God is strength*, or (which is all one) the darkness of God is light: in the same *Job* saith, the light of the grave is darkness. For as God is wisdom, and in him there is no foolishness at all, strength, and in him there is no weakness at all, light, and in him there is no darkness at all: so *Job* supposeth of the grave, that in it there is darkness, and no light at all, while he affirms the light found there is darkness. Christ speaks near this

language

וְהָיָה

à radice

וְהָיָה

Floruit, splen-
duit, fulgorem
et magnificen-
tiam exercuit.
Tenebrescet, si-
cut caligo.

Mon.

Quod in eo
splendissimum
est, caligini
simile est.

language of Job (*Mat. 6. 23.*) *If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness,* he had said before, *The light of the body is the eye, and if the eye be single, the whole body is light,* that is, if a man have right aims and pure ends, these will keep him right in all his course, but if his eye be dark, his ends base, how base will his actions be, how great his darkness? we may argue thus to the point in hand, if the light of the grave be darkness, how great is that darkness? The Prophet *Amos* sets forth great changes in States and Kingdoms by prodigious changes in the air, *Lo, he makes the morning darkness, Ch. 4. 15.* Again, *He turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night, Chap. 5. 8.*

When either civil or morall good is turned into evil, we are past all hope of good; if once our light be dark, we must expect nothing but darkness. The best works of hypocrites will be found wickedness, how wicked then will they be in their worst? if their holiness be unclean, how unclean is their unholiness? all their morall light is as darkness, and all their civil light shall be turned into darkness.

Some (especially Popish) Interpreters understand this description, not of the grave, but of hell. The same word in the Hebrew serves both hell and the grave. Death looks like hell, and bears much of its image. What is there in hell, but the agonies and sweat of death, the pangs and paleness of death? the chains and bonds of death? the state of the damned in hell, is an eternal act of dying. And all that Job speaks of the grave, is fulfilled there to the utmost. There is darkness, like darkness it self, called therefore *utter darkness*; there is the shadow of death without any order, there the light is as darkness. But though the text be true of Hell, yet Job had nothing to do or suffer beyond the grave, and I shall carry his discourse no further, keeping within those confines: We may learn,

That death in it self is no way desirable.

*Resisti theolo-
gizantes ad in-
fernum refe-
runt, sed Job
ad sepulchrum
respexit.
Merc.*

Is there any beauty in darkness, in thick darkness, where there is no order, in darkness, where the very light is darkness? One of the greatest plagues upon *Egypt*, was three dayes darkness; what then is there in death (naturally considered) but a plague, seeing it is perpetual darkness?

If death be such in it self, and such to those who die in sin, how should our hearts be raised up in thankfulness to Christ, who hath put other terms upon death and the grave by dying for our sins! Christ hath made the grave look like a heaven to his. Christ hath
abolish-

abolished death, not death it self (for even beleivers die) but all the trouble and terrour of death, the darknes and the disorder of it, are taken away. Christ hath mortified death, kill'd death, so that now death is not so much an opening of the door of the grave, as it is an opening of the door of heaven. Christ who is the Sun of righteousness, lay in the grave, and hath left perpetual beams of light there for his purchased people. The way to the grave is very dark, but Christ hath set up light for us, or caused light to shine into the way. Christ hath put death into a method, yea Christ hath put death into a kind of life, or he hath put life into the death of beleivers. All the gaslines, horror, yea the darknes and death of death is removed. The Saints may look upon the grave as a land of light, like light it self; yea as a land of life, like life it self, where there is nothing but order, and where the darknes is as light.

Job's reply to *Bildad* and complaints to God have carryed his discourse as far as death and the grave, he gives over in a dark disordered place, God still leaving him under much darknes, and many disorders of spirit. As his great afflictions are yet continued, so his weaknesses continue too. His graces break forth many times, and sometimes his corruption: both are coming to a further discovery, while his third friend *Zophar* takes up the bucklers, and renews the battel: upon what terms he engages with *Job*, how *Job* acquits himself, and comes off from that engagement, is the sum of the four succeeding Chapters.

FINIS.



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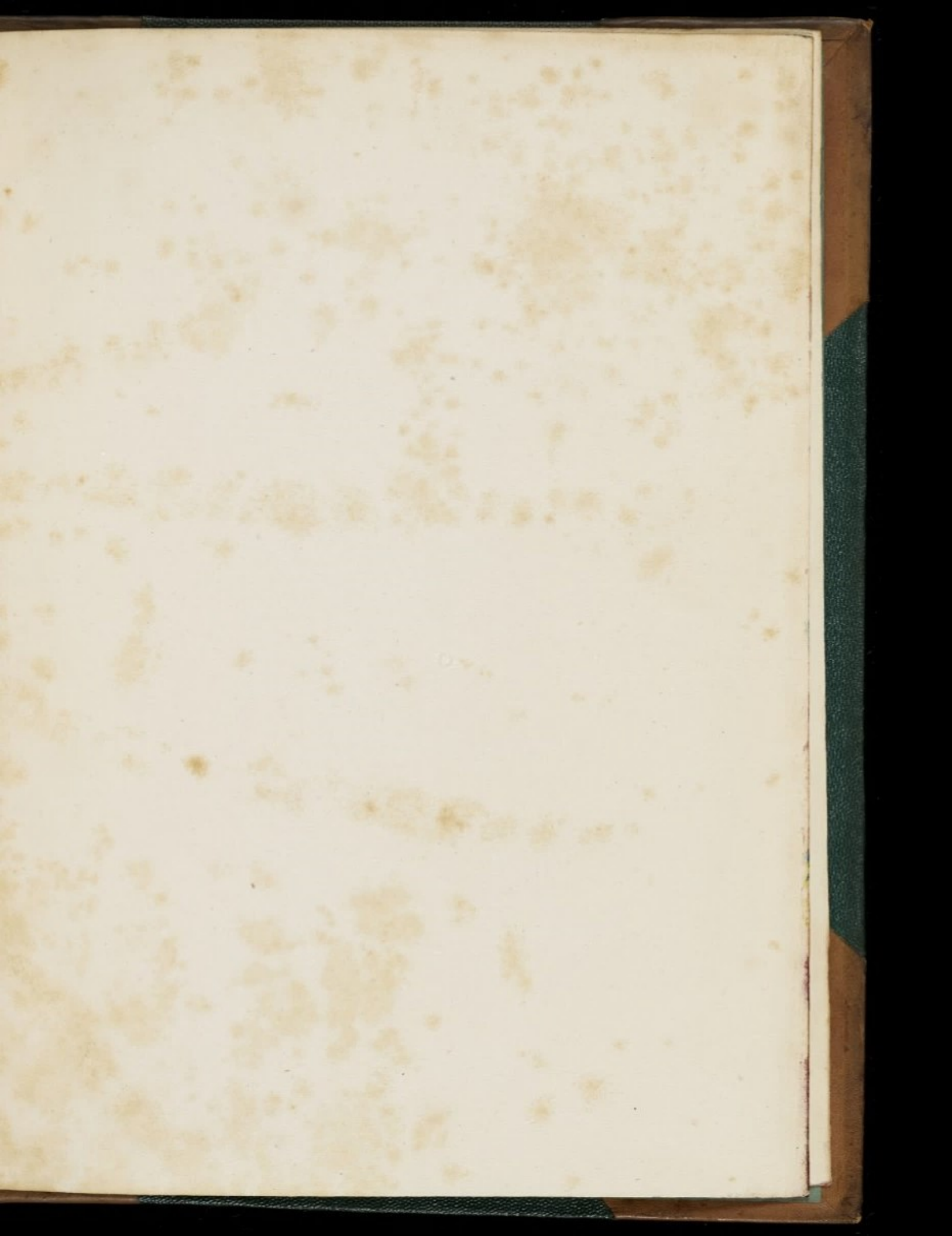
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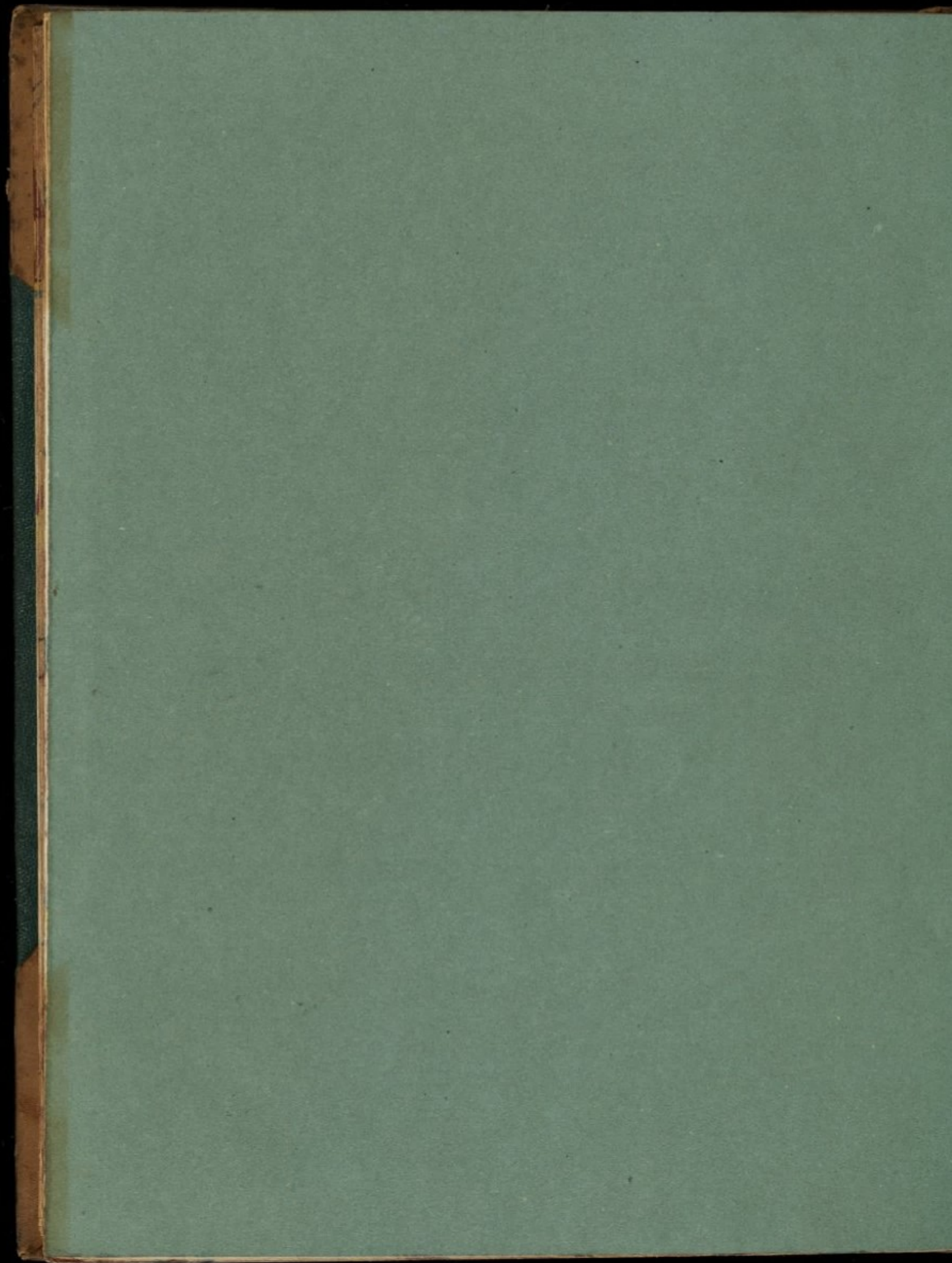
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